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THE BATTLEGROUND IN
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and ALSACE-LORRAINE
Farthest Advance of Germans, 1914
Hindenburg Line, 1917
Farthest Advance of Germans, 1918
Final Battle Line, Nov. 11, 1918
(Neutral Zone along the Rhine)
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Principal Canals
Forts
Scale of Miles
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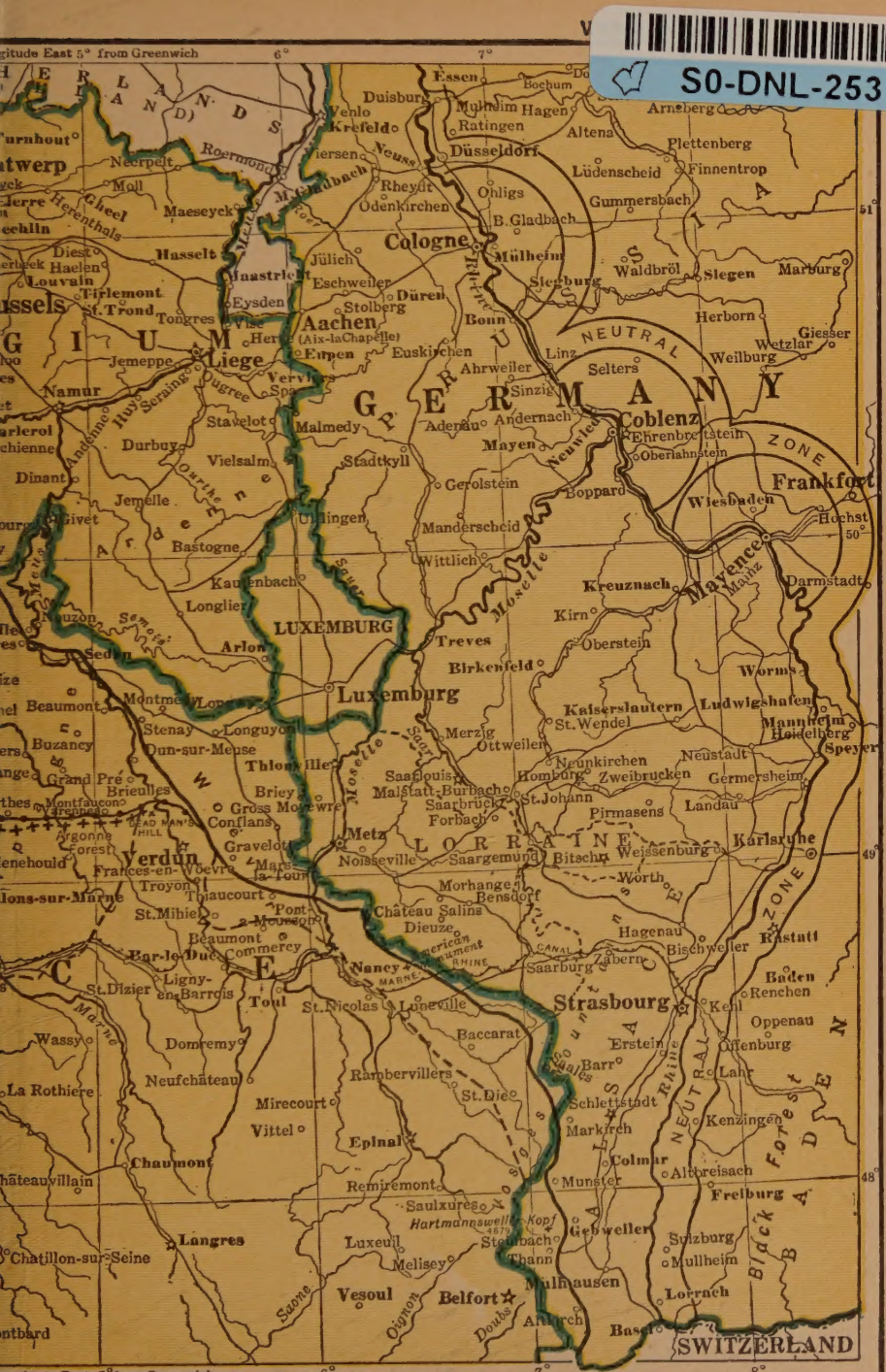
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Gummersbach
Neersen
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Rheydt
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Spa
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Stadtkyll
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Mars-la-Tour
St. Mihiel
Commercy
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Ligny-en-Barrois
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Toul
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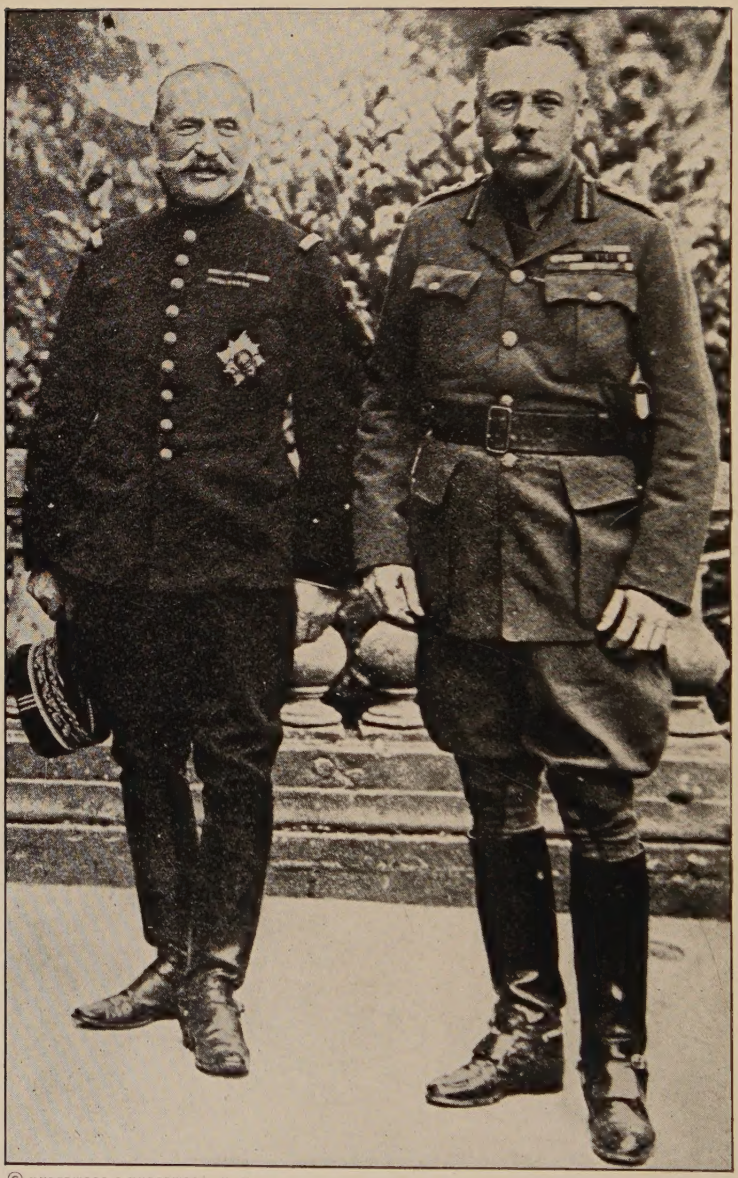

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MARSHAL FOCH AND FIELD-MARSHAL HAIG

# THE LITERARY DIGEST
# History of the World War

Compiled from Original and Contemporary Sources: American, British, French, German, and Other

BY


## FRANCIS WHITING HALSEY

*Author of "The Old New York Frontier," Editor of "Great Epochs in American History," "Seeing Europe with Famous Authors," "Balfour, Viviani, and Joffre, Their Speeches in America," etc.*


IN TEN VOLUMES—ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME V

LUDENDORFF'S COLOSSAL DRIVE IN THE WEST, AND FOCH'S FIRST VICTORIES

March 21, 1918—September 20, 1918

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY

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1920

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# ON THE WESTERN FRONT

## Part XVI

## LUDENDORFF'S COLOSSAL DRIVE IN THE WEST

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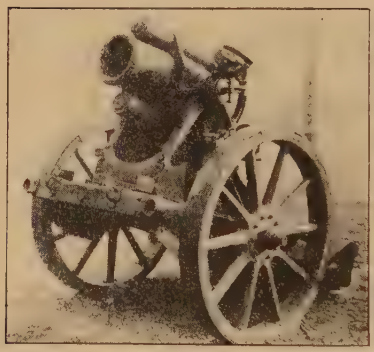
SIEGE HOWITZER



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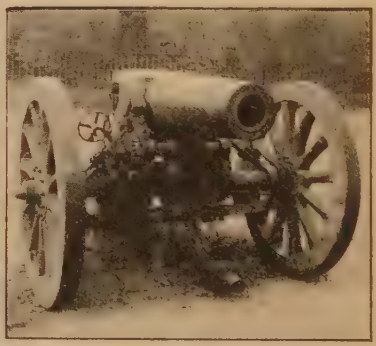

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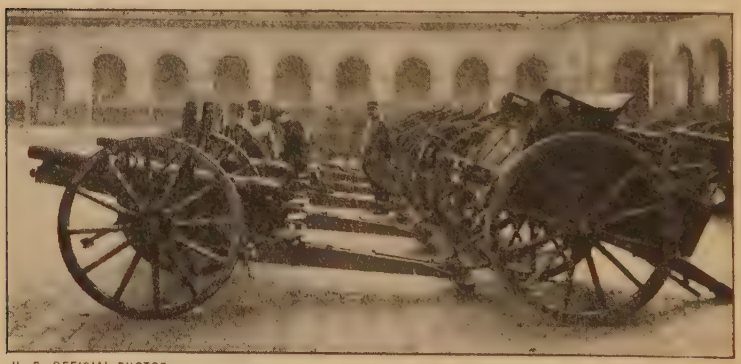

U. S. OFFICIAL PHOTOS.

VARIOUS TYPES EXHIBITED AT THE INVALIDES IN PARIS

TYPES OF GERMAN GUNS

# I

## GERMANY'S BATTLE OF THE SOMME, THE DRIVE ON AMIENS FROM CAMBRAI IS HALTED

### March 21, 1918—April 1, 1918

EXACTLY twenty-five months after the Germans began their attack on Verdun (in February, 1916), and more than three and a half months after a chorus of German newspapers first announced the coming of a great drive in the west —an announcement which they repeated twice afterward as part of their efforts by threats to force the Entente to make peace with them—and when all their peace threats had failed, the thunder of German guns in northern France on March 21, 1918, deepened into a tempest of fire along the British front and began the greatest battle of the war, extending over a front of fifty miles. Special preparations for the drive had been in progress in the German army for about two months, or since the first week in February, when all peace bids having failed, orders for it by the German commanders were definitely issued.[1] This order went forth immediately after the Supreme War Council of the Entente, on February 2, had decided at Versailles that the war would be prosecuted "until such times as the pressure of the effort shall have brought about, in the enemy governments and peoples, a change of temper which would justify the hope of the conclusion of peace on terms which would not involve the abandonment, in the face of aggressive and unrepentant militarism, of all the principles of freedom, justice, and respect for the law of nations, which the Allies are resolved to vindicate."

The Council had been unable to find in the Teutonic peace terms "any real approximation to the moderate conditions laid down by the Allied Governments." Its conviction on this point had been deepened "by the impression made

[1] Statement made by General Ludendorff to the *Cologne Volkszeitung* seven days after the advance began.

by the contrast between the profest idealistic aims with which the Central Powers entered upon negotiations with Russia at Brest-Litovsk, and their now openly disclosed plans of Russian conquest and spoliation." The Council had come to its decision unanimously. Germany was reported to be as much angered as she was surprized at the decision of the Council. The Cologne *Volkszeitung*, for example, called it "a wild fanfare," put forth in the face of the "moderate peace statements" made by Hertling and Czernin, which had been "inspired by the most sincere desire for peace," while the Cologne *Gazette* denounced it as meaning "the political bankruptcy of the Entente." At a time when the Central Powers had been building a new world with strong hands, the Entente was accused of coming forward to "persist in stark negation."

General Ludendorff

It had become plain to all, except the German people themselves, that Berlin was still keeping the Germans under the delusion that they had been forced to fight in their own defense because enemies had planned to attack them, a delusion begotten of more than a generation of systematic teaching at home, in schools and in public life. The German military rulers by this time had got themselves into a position which it was extremely hard for them to abandon, and were so obstinate and persistent in it that it had become impossible for the Allies to deal with them, or to have a conference with them over anything they were ready to propose. There was only one way out and that way the Germans would not take until forced to it, and it was for the Allies to do this forcing until the Teutonic powers were compelled to submit. The one course that remained was the one declared at Versailles—"union in heart and will, not by any

hidden designs, but by an open resolve, to defend civilization against an unscrupulous and brutal domination."

The main German blow fell first upon the British on a thirty-five mile front from Cambrai, St. Quentin, and La Fère, but the zone of operation was afterward extended northward from the Oise and the Scheldt to the Scarpe, the Lys and even toward the Yser. Within three weeks, the whole British front from Amiens, in France, to Ypres, in Belgium, was aflame. The German High Command had determined upon one tremendous effort, a concentration of every man and gun available, a super-Napoleonic campaign for a super-Napoleonic victory. From Russia all the best German troops, from Russia and Austria vast masses of artillery, from Russia, Roumania and Italy all captures of guns and material, together with the best of Austrian artillery, had been taken to the Western Front. The German plan was in reality a simple one—an accumulation of artillery in unexpected amount, followed by an assault of overwhelming numbers whose presence had not been foreseen because they were brought up at night at the very last minute. Even the batteries had been placed in position during the night and thoroughly camouflaged to escape observation. In order to "register" on Entente positions they had fired a minimum of shots at carefully lengthened intervals, and so had learned the exact range without awakening Entente suspicions. In the previous October the First American Division had gone into the trenches. "By March 21, when the German offensive in Picardy began," said Pershing in his report of November 20 to the War Department, "we had four divisions with experience in the trenches, all of which were equal to any demands of battle action."

For months before the battle divisions of German infantry had received a course of long march-training, and only five days before the offensive broke, were still concentrated far before the front. At a given signal they were then moved up by forced night-marches, in place of mechanical transport which would have been observed, and were then rested during the day. Some units marched sixty miles during three nights preceding the battle. One division actually covered twenty miles on the night of March 20, arriving in the

trenches at 4 o'clock in the morning and joined in the attack some five hours later. It had come to be an axiom that, owing to the development of aviation, it would be impossible for either side to effect a concentration on a large scale without its opponent being able to make corresponding arrangements to meet the shock, but the Germans had managed to do so with consequences that only the superhuman heroism of the British and French saved from becoming disastrous to the Entente cause.

Almost as if they were issuing invitations to a State function, the Germans had asked correspondents of their own papers and journalists from neutral countries to appear on the battle-front to witness the beginning of their great offensive. In several large cities, including Cologne, Karlsruhe, Leipzig, Hanover, and Danzig, unusual care had been taken to drill the German press for taking its proper part in the offensive. On March 15 all the editors of newspapers in Westphalia, the Rhineland and Hesse, were assembled in Cologne to meet representatives of the Imperial Government and the Supreme Command, and listen to "a series of very interesting lectures," in order that "the German press should be placed in a position to form an independent judgment of coming events." On following days the same lectures were delivered to gatherings of editors in other cities.

At 5 A. M., on March 21, the German attack began in a bombardment on the British line west of St. Quentin just as an early dawn was breaking. Shells of large and small calibers fell for four hours. When infantry stormed out to make their first great assault, they were favored by the wind and by conditions that permitted them to move forward under cover of a pall of smoke hiding them from the eyes of the British. From lightly held portions the British withdrew, having expected to attack and made great preparations to meet it. The Germans at the same time assaulted the French line northeast of Verdun and near Reims, but on those fronts artillery bore the burden of the fighting. Simultaneously with the launching of the offensive, Germany announced a "strong inclination for peace," with a statement from the Kaiser that "the prize of victory must not and will not fail us—no soft peace, but one which corresponds

with Germany's interests," thus giving the Entente Powers one last chance to yield to German threats.

The Germans next day continued their attacks in great strength and at several points made gains against the British, but at others were repulsed in counter-attacks "Our losses," said the British report, "inevitably have been considerable, but they have not been out of proportion to the magnitude of the battle." In all parts of the battle-front the German losses had also been heavy, their advance everywhere made "at great sacrifice." In a battle that rivaled in ferocity any that had preceded it during three and a half years of

FRENCH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

A BATTERED GERMAN FRONT-LINE TRENCH ON THE SOMME

war, the British, on a fifty-mile front, had to withstand a tremendous onslaught. At some points their line was bent back, making an initial success for the Germans, but one that had been expected by military experts acquainted with the forces the Germans had brought up and the power of the guns they had. The first reports indicated an attempt to drive wedges into both sides of the Cambrai salient, isolate the British troops further east and so regain that part of the Hindenburg line from which the Germans had been driven on November 22 by Byng's sudden blow. The fighting at some points on a fifty-mile front was only a subordinate

matter, compared with the terrific onslaught aimed at Gauche Wood and Lagnicourt, the south and north bases of the salient. Forty divisions and perhaps more—about 400,000 or perhaps 600,000 Teutonic troops were engaged at the start. On one small sector alone there were 1,000 guns. The attack was launched under the eyes of the Kaiser, Hindenburg, and Ludendorff, but Ludendorff was in real command of it.

All correspondents emphasized the immensity of the German artillery assault. Upon one corps' front there was a gun every fifty yards. It seemed almost a counsel of desperation that had ordered this assault. A local defeat of the Entente, even of Isonzo dimensions, so long as an army remained somewhere to stop the flood, could not end the war. The Allies were fighting in self-defense, Prussia was contending for empire, and there were ample evidences that Prussia was staking all she had upon the throw. The battle took place within the 1,300 square miles from which the Germans had withdrawn, or were driven, a year before, and the devastation they had made there had left nothing in itself worth striving for. Unless they could smash the opposing armies, they would have to own another Verdun failure. To the valor that turned them back at the Marne, held them in check at Ypres, on the Yser, and at Verdun, the cause of free civilization for the world was now committed.

The British battle-line south of the St. Quentin Canal was held by three divisions. Along this sector the German line before the attack was also held by three divisions, but the night before the battle they were reinforced until eight divisions (upward of 100,000 men) were massed for assault on a front of some 2,000 yards. This was probably a greater strength than had ever been brought into battle on so narrow a front during the whole war. After three days the map showed that the Germans, with apparently inexhaustible reserves and thousands of guns, had reached the line held by the British at the opening of the battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916. The British at that time had to fight hard for every mile they gained, and their offensive lasted four months. Over this territory the Germans had now driven their Juggernaut for three days and had overrun the British defenses and taken many prisoners and guns. Their offen-

GEN. SANDEMAN CAREY

sive had by far the greater power because it was assaulting in such masses, indifferent to the huge sacrifice of life. Flesh and blood could not long stand such an ordeal. In that view, and in the assurance that the British would make a stronger stand in every new position to which they fell back, was anchored the Entente faith that the German advance could be stayed and that the British and French reserves would counter-attack eventually with success.

The broad outlines of the battle were clearly discerned. The fifty miles could be divided roughly into two sectors, one extending from the Scarpe down to and including the salient captured in the Cambrai battle, the other extending from just south of that salient to the Oise, near La Fère. On the first the battle at the beginning went well for Great Britain in that the line was dented but nowhere seriously broken. The British had to make considerable retirements, but these resulted less from direct enemy pressure than from necessity of conforming to what occurred in the south. In the southern sector things went differently. This sector was divided more or less in half by the outskirts of St. Quentin. On the first day the Germans got past the British battle zone and reached Essigny, and next day duplicated the achievement by breaking through northwest of St. Quentin.

In this way the defenses were completely carried, and the British had to execute a hurried retreat to the next fortified position. Terrific fighting followed fresh attacks made by the Germans on the third day, north and south of Péronne, and the Germans succeeded in crossing the Somme at certain points. North of Péronne the British line, under pressure of violent assaults, virtually broke and withdrew to new position. For this disaster the general in command of the Fifth Army, Sir Hubert Gough, was at the time held responsible, and after the drive slowed down was superseded. A brilliant reputation went into eclipse. There was no panic, no faltering among the men, but the army apparently was not well led. At the critical moment, a general named Sandeman Carey, previously almost unknown to fame, collected in the rear a scratch force of men who were not of the first class as fighting-men, pushed to the front with them and saved the day. Byng with the Third Army had held

fast, but Gough with the Fifth had not lived up to his reputation—so ran the comment.

Carey was one of those fortunate men to whom a chance had at last come after years of preparation. An old regular officer, he had commanded a battery of field-artillery in the South African war, and in the present war had won a Commandership of the Bath and been promoted to be an artillery brigadier. It was on the sixth day of the offensive that his chance came. The Germans had then entered Albert and Roye and were advancing rapidly to the little stream called the Luce, ahead of them. No troops in formation could be found at the moment to reinforce the British. At 2 o'clock in the morning on March 26, Carey was ordered to leave his guns, conjure up a force of infantry from the scattered forces around him, and hold on. By telephone, messenger, and flag-signals, he rounded up every available man. First, there were labor battalions, sturdy, middle-aged men, the despair of a military martinet, but strong as oxen, and mighty bruisers at close quarters. An infantry training school nearby provided others, while machine-gunners, electricians and signalers were quite ready to take the rifle. Royal engineers, field companions, and a party of American engineers were also thrown in. By the middle of the next morning Carey had a considerable number of men and by afternoon organized them and selected and marked out the position they must hold. He had fifty cavalrymen to do a little scouting, but in the main had to depend entirely on the sheer grit of his scratch force, who lay in shallow trenches, firing almost point-blank at gray hordes of Germans, and at every moment of respite seizing their shovels to improve their shelters. For nearly six days they stuck to it, and, as Lloyd George said, "they held the German army and closed that gap on the way to Amiens."

Carey was described as the life and inspiration of the entire force. Careless of danger, he rode along the hastily entrenched line, giving an order here and shouting words of encouragement there to weary and hard-prest men. His staff had been as hastily recruited as his men. Three companies of engineers caught in the early bombardment had been ordered to fall back An American company, consoli-

dated with British Royal Engineers, was now delegated to the task of guaranteeing the destruction of an engineers' dump which it had been decided to abandon. This detachment destroyed all the material, made a rapid retreat, caught up with the larger group, and resumed work in laying out trenches, operations that lasted from March 22 to the 27th. As the German attack became more intense, these engineers, joined by cooks, orderlies, and railway-men, were added to Carey's forces, and inflicted casualties "by the thousands on the Germans as they advanced in close formation, in one place in as many as seven waves, each wave ten men deep and 100 yards apart." With all the ammunition they needed, but armed only with rifles and a few machine-guns, they "poured scythe-like streams of bullets into the enemy at several different times until their weapons became so hot as to be useless." The Americans, "sickened by the shambles they created, fought furiously for several days, helping to hold the enemy all the way from near St. Quentin to the vicinity of Noyon." When the German attack began, they had been working in rear lines, but they had "quickly thrown away their tools, seized the weapons with which they had been armed for some months, and formed themselves into a fighting unit."

It was nearly a month before men were able to piece together in detail the story of the feat of Carey and his scratch brigade. When the Germans were pressing hard there had been nothing to prevent them from rushing through, if only they had known it. Every kind of British went into this action. British labor units fought side by side with ordinary infantry. In one way or another the front was held by that chance force in khaki against trained German battalions. Altho Carey's regular job was artillery-work, he was known as a fine soldier. Probably he owed much of his success to the exhaustion of the attacking troops, who had been living for days on "iron rations," but his resourceful and vigorous counter-attack made the Germans believe they were face to face with a properly organized force and so he held them off till reinforcements arrived.

The basic cause of the retirement of Gough's army, as

afterward learned, was insufficiency of reserves. Not only had his army been reduced in personnel, but it had been obliged to occupy the firing-line with a perilously inadequate number of rifles. It was the one weak link in the Allied chain from the sea to Switzerland, and of this the Germans were doubtless aware. When the link broke, a master craftsman was needed to repair it, and then by unanimous consent Foch came into his own as generalissimo. Gough's first public statement was made known on May 3 in a letter to the Lord Mayor of Belfast, in which he paid tribute to the work of the Irish troops, and said the Fifth Army was greatly outnumbered on the opening day of the offensive, while the odds increased in later days. Nevertheless the Fifth Army had fought with splendid calmness and doggedness, and "their tenacity saved Great Britain and France by permitting the arrival of reserves." Some idea of what those odds were was disclosed in the fact that on March 21 there were only fourteen British infantry divisions against forty German divisions, reinforced by some eight to ten more divisions during the subsequent two days.

Lieut.-Gen. Sir Hugh Gough

Gough's army had been sent down in January to take over from the French a sector forty to fifty miles long. For days Gough had known that the German attack was imminent, had moved his men up to their positions and had made every preparation possible. The only thing he could not foresee or guard against was mist and fog. This, combined with the efficiency with which the Germans made use of their interior lines, kept him in the dark until the advancing waves of gray were in sight. The mist prevented his men from seeing anything for more than thirty yards, so that the Germans crept up until Gough's outpost line was

overrun and his whole line broken up. While perhaps no radical blame could be attached to Gough himself, he had to pay the price which a defeated general must pay in war, and so was removed. There was no question that British soldiers under him fought bravely as they had always fought. An official report from Haig was published in October covering the German offensive. Its most interesting statement was the following:

"Altogether at least sixty-four German divisions participated in the operations of March 21, a number considerably exceeding the total forces comprising the British Army in France. The total British force on the original battle-front on March 21 was twenty-nine infantry divisions and three cavalry divisions, of which nineteen divisions were in line."

These numbers went far toward vindicating Gough's rôle in the battle. Sixty-four German divisions, or about 750,000 men, had been thrown against nineteen British divisions, or at most 285,000 men, on a fifty-mile front. Along the Gough sector the odds were more formidable than elsewhere, since that line was thinly held and was without adequate trench defenses. It was thought Gough's troops may well have been outnumbered five to one at the moment of impact. We were told that sixty-four German divisions "considerably outnumbered" the total British army in France, which meant that this army was not much more than 700,000 strong at a time when popular estimates had put it at two millions.

Copies of the plan of offensive taken from prisoners showed that so far the German command had fallen far short of the objective they had set for the first four days. An advantage which the British had was their aerial superiority. A new British machine, a small monoplane constructed on the same lines as the French "spad," had proved the most successful air-weapon of the war. The loss by Germans of many leading pilots had contributed to their growing weakness. With moonlight of sufficient brilliance to permit the reading of a newspaper, British bombing-planes and weapons swarmed out, carrying high explosives far behind the battle-zone. When the sun came up next morning, like prowling night-birds they returned to

their roost. Ground-fighting was then speeded up, scout fleets succeeding bombers, flying low over clashing infantry, harassing German columns, and taking observations for their own artillery. These British airmen smashed all airplane records. Forty-seven German airplanes were downed on the second day and as many more on the third day.

In England the feeling at this grave and anxious time was one of confidence and pride in the British army. Some relief was felt that Germany had finally shown her hand. The purpose and method of her long-talked of blow had become plain. The German objective was again the Channel ports, if not Paris. They had taken the first step toward it by breaking through Allied defenses near the junction of French and British armies. No great surprize was felt that the British line was forced back. Lines of defense had been bent in all great offensives in this war. What the British people looked to the army for was that it should not break. Since it appeared that this was the long-heralded German offensive, the most colossal struggle in the war, public and press were unanimously of opinion that failure for the Germans would mean an approaching end of the war. On this effort the Germans were staking everything and their initial successes, due primarily to the concentration of great forces, rendered possible by the Russian collapse, were almost inevitable.

Bapaume, Péronne, and Ham were the immediate objectives of the Germans, as they had been of the Allies two years before. On the fourth day the Germans claimed the capture of Péronne and Ham. It was useless to try to disguise the gravity of the situation, but it was a mistake to regard this blow as of vital significance. The Germans made the most of their successes as they were bound to do, as a tonic for the spirits of people at home already grown tired of the war, and doubtful of its issue. But for the Allied nations the event was merely significant of the lengthened struggle for which events in Russia had prepared all sober-minded men. It was a time to keep heads cool, to cultivate a sense of proportion and see things through the eyes of the man at the front rather than the man in the street. The man in the Allied trenches and on the Allied

redoubts was experiencing something of the joy of battle, because a long-awaited opportunity had come. The news was disquieting, but there was no occasion to be downhearted. In the first battle of the Somme, the British had attacked on a twenty-five mile front. In this assault the points of contact were from thirty to fifty miles apart. There was fighting near Croisilles and La Fère on the first day, and later there were desperate combats at Mory and near St. Quentin; the distance between which places was thirty miles.

On the fourth day with the sanguinary struggle still going on, the British on most sectors were apparently holding their own, but with the Germans at salient points pressing forward. The town of Chauny, southwest of St. Quentin on the road to Compiègne, was occupied. Throughout March 24, along the entire fifty-mile front, fighting never ceased, and where Haig's men were unable to withstand the terrific onslaughts delivered by greatly superior forces, ground was given, but in orderly fashion. It had now been definitely ascertained that more than a million Germans had been brought to the Western Front, in an endeavor to crush the British army holding the line from the region of Arras to south of St. Quentin; but it became increasingly evident that the enemy had met with a degree of opposition not counted upon and were unable to realize to the full their objectives.

One of the mysteries of the offensive was the shelling of Paris by long-range German guns located about seventy-six miles from the center of Paris. Throughout Sunday morning and into the mid-afternoon shells were dropt on the city at intervals of from twelve to twenty minutes. People who remained in bed were not disturbed. The force of the explosions was not greater than that of many bombs dropt on the city in the past from airplanes. Being of light explosive power, the shells made only small holes in the ground. Measurements at several places showed that holes averaged four feet in diameter and not more than two feet deep. Bombs from aeroplanes heretofore had frequently been much more effective. British experts suggested the possibility of shells having been propelled from Zeppelins at a great

height. Experts were frankly skeptical and considered various theories, including the possibility of a newly discovered propellant of a power hitherto unknown. The Germans probably sought to spread a belief that they had developed a new and wonderful gun in a hope of demoralizing the morale in Paris and London and on the English coast, Dover being within its range.

There were only three of these guns, but the Germans had sprung one of the greatest surprizes of the war. One expert estimated that the weight of the projectile was about 380 pounds, and that it left the gun with a muzzle velocity of about 4,000 feet per second, the gun having an elevation of about sixty-five degrees, "which very quickly took the projectile into a stratum of rarefied air, in which resistance was greatly minimized." The strain upon the gun he thought enormous, and probably it would be unable to survive more than a hundred rounds at the most. Each gun cost nearly $5,000. All experts agreed that, at such a tremendous range, even approximate accuracy was out of the question, and, therefore, the gun was only of use where a target was presented on a vast scale, like Paris.

The effects were entirely without military importance, the only results being the destruction of some property and the killing and wounding of a number of harmless citizens, including women and children. On March 24, Palm Sunday, Paris was shelled a second time. Good Friday was also singled out as an appropriate day for the work. On the latter date churches would be filled with worshipers, and there would be an opportunity for repeating on land the deed achieved in sinking the *Lusitania*. "According to plan" the church of St. Gervais was struck, part of the roof broken down, 76 persons killed and 90 wounded, of whom a large part were women and children. With these exceptions the casualties from this gun were limited to rather small numbers, rarely over one, for each shell fired. It did not take long to ascertain where the guns were stationed. French aviators discovered them behind the St. Gobian Forest, not far from La Fère.[2]

[2] In the Paris *Illustration* of March 30th—*i.e*, only seven days after the firing began, a map was given showing the location of one gun-emplacement.

THE GERMAN OFFENSIVE
March 21, 1918
The Battlefields of the Somme
Reference:
Line at Opening of Offensive
Line at Close of Offensive
Highways
Railroads
Canals
Tramways
Scale of Miles
0 5 10
Bethune
Lens
Liévin
Arras
Douai
Somain
Cambrai
Doullens
Albert
Amiens
Péronne
Montdidier
Roye
Nesle
Ham
Chauny
Noyon
Compiègne
Clermont
Soissons
St. Quentin
Bapaume
Le Catelet
Bellicourt
Bellenglise
Gobain Forest
PAS DE CALAIS
SOMME
FRANCE
AISNE
OISE
NORD
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

Three gun-emplacements, hidden by the trees, were eventually found on the reverse slope of a wooded hill known as the Mont de Joie, between the Laon-La Fère railway and

PHOTO BY BROWN BROS., N. Y

THE PARIS CHURCH OF ST. GERVAIS

Scene of the Good Friday attack on Paris by one of the long-distance guns. Some 75 people while at the service were killed and 90 injured, owing to a blow from a shell which caused a part of the roof to fall. The church stands near the Hôtel de Ville

the La Fère road, an outlying spur of the massif of St. Gobain. The three gun-pits were arranged approximately in the form of an equilateral triangle, the apex of which pointed toward Paris. They were all well under the crest line. Each consisted of a concrete pit in the shape of a

long and deep trench, to which a railway ran back from the Laon-La Fère line. At the front end of each a concrete platform was constructed on which the gun-carriage rested, carefully covered by branches of trees which, combined with the neighboring wood, served to protect the position from view.

When a big gun was fired a number of 17-cm. guns in its neighborhood were simultaneously discharged, so as to cover the sound of the larger explosion. Whenever French aviators were seen approaching, the anti-aircraft guns were brought into action and volumes of smoke discharged to render observation difficult. Except at the time of discharge the gun was not elevated, but kept down to avoid detection. Accommodation for the gun-crews was provided in a bomb-proof dugout, which was connected with the gun-pit by a deep trench. To drive the shell over the 75-mile range to Paris required a very high muzzled velocity, and this rendered necessary a very large charge. The amount of the propellant was more than the weight of the shell, and probably exceeded it by one-third. The great reason why so long a range was attained was that its trajectory for a large portion of the shell's flight was at such a height above the earth that it passed through an atmosphere so attenuated as to afford very little retardation. The Germans could not have expected to do serious damage in Paris with such small shells and probably relied for results on the moral effect the bombardment would produce, but in this they were mistaken. Parisians absolutely declined to be frightened by these guns. Life went on much as usual.

French artillery by April 27 had destroyed or crippled two of these long-range cannon, each of which was called by the French, "Bertha," from Bertha Krupp, chief owner of the Krupp concern. French air observers told when and where French guns should open fire on "Bertha." Two heavy shells on April 27 exploded 250 yards north of the second big gun, tearing up the railroad tracks leading to the concrete gun platform. The firing was continued, getting closer and closer, until finally two enormous shells went through the camouflage, formidable explosions

were heard, and "Bertha" had a rent fifty feet long in her barrel. Aviators reported that they could see plainly through the camouflage two gaping craters in the platform. To English "Tommies" "Bertha" became known as "Long-winded Lizzie." For many weeks afterward, at least one of the big guns continued at intervals to send shells into Paris, doing a moderate amount of destruction and causing occasional deaths among the people who did not heed the warnings given by sirens.

The British in desperate fighting used few troops other

EMPLACEMENT FOR THE LONG-RANGE GERMAN GUN

than those which held front lines. These troops, in as gallant a defense as was ever recorded in the annals of the British army, enabled the main body to fall back deliberately and without confusion to occupy positions prepared long before the offensive began. The Germans, hurling vast hordes into the fray, had come into abandoned positions, getting farther and farther away from their supplies, with communications increasingly difficult. The slaughter of German infantry as it advanced in close formation was appalling. British losses were described as "within the bounds expected," a considerable number of men in prisoners and a certain number of guns, but few pieces of artillery after the first day. The whole withdrawal, executed in a masterly manner,

showed how thoroughly the British had planned for the events that occurred.

What was the whole truth about the great battle, the public at the time did not quite know. Only a few facts were plain. The Germans were making an attack in great force and had had a relative success. The British had yielded ground of from two or three to ten or eleven miles, along a front of fifty miles. The Germans had taken numerous villages and towns, including Ham and Péronne, with many prisoners and booty in guns and supplies. But they had made enormous sacrifices and had failed to effect anything like a permanent breach in British defenses. While they profest to be elated, the British and French still spoke fearlessly. Men did not know the German purpose in making the attack; or the real force employed; or the German losses; or the British losses; whether the British had retired voluntarily to economize men, while slaughtering oncoming Germans, or whether they were driven back; whether they had a series of defensive lines at their rear upon which to retreat, and were allowing the enemy to dash themselves to exhaustion or destruction; whether the Germans were really satisfied with the results attained and considered them worth the cost; inferentially, whether the attack would be pushed to further gains, or losses, or would be charged to profit as it stood; whether a new attack would be begun presently on a new sector; or whether the French would counter-attack upon some other part of the line.

BERTHA KRUPP (FRAU KRUPP VON BOHLEN)

After Bapaume fell the British north and south of the Somme withdrew under enormous pressure toward the line which they held before the Hindenburg retirement a year before. But the German advance seemed to be slowing down

a little and their claims of prisoners taken were not mounting. The British front had been sent back, but it had not been severed. German strategy and tactical methods had been the same as were employed at the Dunajec, at Verdun, and on the Isonzo. The long line might bend and yield at points, but a new connection could be established a little further back. The entire Allied position in France, therefore, was not threatened by a heavy blow at one sector as the Russian position had been threatened in 1915, or the Italians in 1917. The Allies in France had a sound defensive alinement, troops of as good quality as Germany, as many men, and nearly as many guns in the fighting line and as ample reserves. Just after the fall of Bapaume the Kaiser, in a visit to the devastated area, made a remark that was widely commented on at the time. "What have I not done to preserve the world from these horrors?" said he. Karl Rosner[3] described the scene in language meant to be dramatic and which was peculiarly German:

"The Kaiser brings to a group of men whom he has summoned around him the news of the fall of Bapaume. 'I want to go out there at once,' he says; 'I want to see how far I can get along the Cambrai-Bapaume road. I must see the boys who again have fought so magnificently.' He telephones the glorious news to the Crown Prince, and then the work of the day begins. In his gray field motor-car the Kaiser goes first to Hindenburg and Ludendorff. Ludendorff works with him and, peering at the map through his eyeglass, says: 'We shall knock them out, your Majesty.'

"Hindenburg, the golden rays of the cross on his breast glittering in the sunlight, leads the Kaiser back to his car. The War Lord holds the hand of his faithful knight and knows if he gives him 'permission' to proceed to the Bapaume road all things must go well. The Field-Marshal gives the Kaiser this 'permission,' and Hindenburg, the living conscience of the German Army, thus assumes the responsibility for the Kaiser's safety on the battle-scarred ground. He passes to the battle-field and sees there so many terrible things that his visage becomes grim and his mouth remains tightly closed. Only once does he open it, and then it is to say to the officer marching at his side: 'What have I not done to preserve the world from these horrors?'"

Many comments were evoked by Rosner's chronicle, mostly

[3] In the Berlin *Lokal-Anzeiger*.

satirical ones. In one of these it was observed that, as the form of the Kaiser's question implied that he had left nothing undone to prevent war, he must have begun his labors at Potsdam on July 5, 1914, when the war lords of Germany were deciding to launch the war, and must have positively forbidden them to do so. When he persisted in his veto, he must have threatened to abdicate rather than sanction such horror, and, when they silenced his protests and his threats, they must have bound, gagged and imprisoned him in the cellar so that they could go ahead with their unmolested plans. Eighteen days later, when the conspiracy bore fruit in the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, the Kaiser was cruising in the North Sea on his yacht, where he must have had a wireless apparatus on board his yacht and been busy with frantic appeals to Kaiser Franz Joseph not to carry out the Potsdam plot. In the ten days that followed he must have been besieging the war lords with urgent pleas to let him accept the proposals of Grey and Sazonof and get the dispute arbitrated. So also must he have disapproved of the seizure of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, of the stirring up of Bulgaria and Serbia against each other in 1913, and of all the other German steps that had led inevitably to war.

As by a strange coincidence there was published soon after this incident what is known as Prince Lichnowsky's[4] "Memorandum," in which, as already set forth, he showed in minute detail how it was not "the perfidy of England" that brought on the war but "the perfidy of Berlin." Besides Lichnowsky's statement, there were also the revelations made by Dr. Muehlon, a former Krupp director, who resigned from the directorate in 1914, because of his horror at the conspiracy in the German Government which he had unearthed. Dr. Muehlon exonerated Foreign Minister von Jagow from responsibility for the terms of the Austrian memorandum, because when the matter reached Jagow, "the Kaiser had so far committed himself that it was too late for any procedure, according to diplomatic custom, and there was nothing more to be done." No less a person than Herr Krupp von Bohlen, the husband of Bertha Krupp, told

[4] German Ambassador to Great Britain.

Muehlon that "Germany ought not, in such a tremendous affair, to have given a blank check to a State like Austria," but it had now appeared that it was the Kaiser who gave the blank check. In fact, the Kaiser told Krupp von Bohlen that "this time people would see that he did not turn about," and gave repeated insistence that now "nobody would be able to accuse him of indecision." The Kaiser's place thus became fixt at last as not only one of the Potsdam plotters, but as the one who carried out their plans with an eager efficiency that made war inescapable. And yet, in

GERMAN MUNITION TRAIN WRECKED BY BRITISH FIRE

sight of the devastation his armies had wrought, he was pleading innocence.

It had been the history of every big offensive in this war that it finally wore itself down, on whatever scale it was attempted, because of almost insuperable difficulties in the way of continued movement. Guns and transports were not able to keep pace with infantry. The Russians were thrust out of Poland and Galicia in 1915 because of their inability to rally after one smashing blow; the Italians were forced from the Isonzo to the Piave because their armies were caught off their balance and threatened with envelopment.

Ludendorff's success in March, 1918, thus far was impressive, but it was less impressive than the first phase of the German onrush at Verdun. Fifty-two German divisions (624,000 men) were identified and others were known to have been engaged. Instead of the break anticipated, the British line held firm and continuous everywhere. The British believed the German casualties already amounted to more than 200,000, a seemingly fantastic figure, but they were based on calculations not easy to dispute. But two hundred thousand or half a million might be a cheap price to pay if the Germans could accomplish a great stroke. So far there was no sign of success for them and they now had behind them for communication only a few roads and practically no railroads, so that the task of bringing up heavy guns and munitions, without which they could not get on, had become tremendous. The British, on the other hand, were nearly back, but not quite back, on their old Somme front, and thus had the advantage of all the communications they had constructed for that offensive nearly two years before. Not only had the Germans to bring up heavy artillery, but they had to register guns upon new British positions and they had to fight, for a time at least, under most unfavorable conditions, while British conditions in transport, reserves and positions were better than at any time since the attack began.

In all the great offensives in the west so far, the crisis had passed by the end of the first week. At Verdun the French counter-attacked on the sixth day when the German rush was over. At Arras the British had to stop after five days. Save where the original thrust ended in a complete rupture of the enemy's lines, and this only happened in the east, there had been no continued advances in offensive after the first week. So far the Germans had not broken the Allied line; on the contrary, they had been temporarily halted in the center. Their efforts had been stupendous, but even a machine like the German army had its limits. The crest of the German flood-tide had apparently been reached. Further than this, the Allied reserve army, the strategic reserve of the Allied War Council of Versailles, had not yet intervened, and until it intervened and failed it was unwise to

view the situation as desperate.[5] The longer the German advance could be parried, the further the Germans would get from their heavy guns and munitions; the more exhausted would become their men and the better would be the chance of success for a counter-stroke. So far the territory evacuated had no value, thanks to German vandalism a year before, and therefore its surrender meant nothing. The British had retired almost to the frontier of this desert.

Battling for every point of vantage, giving ground only when overwhelmed by numbers and exacting a frightful toll of lives for every foot of ground abandoned, the British line in France remained intact. The largest gains made by the Germans were west of St. Quentin, where they captured Nesle and Guiscard, points more than ten miles from the front as it stood on March 21. In the scheme of the German attack was seen a repetition of the German "pincer" system of attack, used by Mackensen in Russia, Roumania, and Serbia. This attack consisted of two strokes some distance apart, which, after penetrating to some depth, turned toward each other, compelling forces caught between them to fall back or be in danger of capture. The British had foreseen this danger and met it by first checking and then forcing the northern jaw of the pincer southward, while they dropt back on the center and so did not get into the German trap. The fall of Bapaume had been the result of a determination to drop back slowly all along the line attacked. Repeated heavy attacks on Bapaume had been beaten off by the British, who also forced the Germans back across the Somme at a number of points, but only to fall back when the safe retreat of the main body of the army had been assured. During the continued falling back, the people of London and Paris preserved a remarkable calm. In Washington it was felt that the momentum of the German thrust would soon spend itself. President Wilson, in sending congratulations to Haig, exprest confidence in the ability of the British to stop the onrush.

In forming an estimate of the advance it had to be constantly borne in mind that the British defenses were of an entirely different character from those of the Germans

[5] Perry Robinson in a dispatch to The *Times* (New York).

against which so much trouble had been experienced in Allied offensives of former years. The German construction had aimed at an occupancy more or less permanent. The Germans never intended to move out of them during an attack. A defensive program was to be maintained by means of them indefinitely. This was an accepted and acknowledged fact. The British, on the other hand, constructed defensive works with the idea at some time or other of launching an attack from them. It was their task to drive the Germans out of France, and this could never be done by defensive warfare. Consequently their preparations held none of the permanent features which were so characteristic of the Germans. Hence when the German attack of March, 1918, was delivered, progress became much easier than progress by the British against the German lines. The situation had demanded of the British much greater flexibility. The rigidity of the German trench-system was not in any way suited to the task which the British had to perform.

After six days not only had progress materially slackened, but the form of the dent made in the Allied line west of Cambrai began to be a wedge-like salient, instead of a broad, straightforward movement. At its apex this wedge had gone beyond Albert, westward of the old Allied line as it stood a year before when Hindenburg began his "strategic retreat." In spite of tremendous exertions and terrific losses, the German efforts to widen the tip of this salient had failed by the sixth day. British lines stood firm to the north and forced the Germans to turn southward toward the point of least resistance. There were some American forces engaged in this struggle; they were described as "fighting shoulder to shoulder" with the French and British in the region of Roye, on the southern side of the salient. Entente confidence was now centered in the great strategic reserve of men to be used in just the contingency which now confronted the armies which had borne the brunt of fighting. This force was expected to be launched when and where it was believed that it would break the force of the German onslaught. Three and a half months later it was launched.

Despite attempts of the Germans to gain supremacy in the air, the British held it. In four days, from March 21

to 24, they brought down 216 German machines, as against 31 missing British machines. Air-fighting on the 24th was thus far the fiercest of the war. On that day alone 70 Germans were brought down as against 10 British. Besides air-fighting, the British airmen did fine work in attacking German troops with machine-gun fire at low altitudes and creating havoc among them with bombs. The record of the British Air Service on March 20, the day before the battle began, had been 23 Germans down as against 3 British missing. On the 22d it was 50 Germans down as compared with 8 British missing. On the 23d it was 56 Germans down as against 9 British missing, and on the 24th, 70 Germans down as against 10 British missing. During the night operations on these four days 52½ tons of bombs were dropt on troops, ammunition dumps, railway stations, and German towns, including Cologne. By day bomb-dropping assumed colossal proportions. On the 21st, 900 bombs were dropt on troops; on the 22d, 8½ tons; on the 23d, 14 tons, and on the 24th, 1,700 bombs. On one day the British dropt almost as many bombs on the Germans as the Germans dropt on the British during the whole month of February. In daylight alone on March 21 and 24, the British dropt a total of 2,600 bombs, compared with 8,843, their total for the whole month of February.

Ludendorff's advance was more and more taking the form of a salient, which meant that the power of his thrust was narrowing into an apex. This apex pointed to the gap between Roye and Noyon, but to secure a real rupture in the Allied front it had to extend over a front of at least twenty-five miles in order to permit the passage of such a cataract of Germans as would be needed to make Ludendorff a conqueror. The most hopeful element in the situation came from two sentences in Haig's report where he said the Germans "had been obliged to reinforce their lines from all parts of the western theater," and that "over seventy hostile divisions were known to be engaged." The British—least of all Haig—were not given to boasting in their official statements. Allowing 12,000 men of all arms to a German division, this showed that 840,000 German soldiers had been thrown into the maelstrom and yet had failed to break the

line; while, as far as the German fighting organization went, it had been for a time destroyed, because a division becomes useless on the fighting line when 20 per cent. of its effectives were out of commission.

The great advantage of an offensive against an entrenched position, aside from the mere question of choice of terrain, lies in the fact that it is able to gather and concentrate its men with fair speed, and then strike before the defense can concentrate against the onslaught. This advantage, however, is usually short-lived, its length of life depending primarily on the transportation facilities, and on the degree of concentration of the offensive itself. Sooner or later, if the defensive force has a mobile reserve at its command sufficiently strong to act as an offset, the inequality is eliminated and the relative strength of the opposing forces returns to what might be termed a condition of normality. The Germans had concentrated on a front of not more than fifty miles a force of nearly a million men, or 20,000 to the mile. This was five times the normal British strength per mile of front. With these odds against them, and in view further of the fact that German tactics depended largely for results upon shock action, it was not surprizing that the Germans completely overran the British lines. The British problem was one of concentrating sufficient men to check the offensive, but this was a task of giant proportions. It meant that not less than three-quarters of a million men had to be rushed to the front before the Germans could be opposed by equal numbers.

There were obviously two methods by which this could be done: by drawing immediately upon what might be termed the strategic reserve, that is, an independent mobile army strictly not a part of the trench system; or, by drawing on local reserves in depots immediately behind the line. The latter reserve was in reality a part of the trench system and it belonged to the units actually under fire. The method was an exceedingly dangerous one in that, by calling into action this reserve army all possibility of counter-effort would have been given up, all opportunity of turning the tide of battle to advantage abandoned. It had only quickness to recommend it. The British adopted the second

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AUSTRALIANS NEAR THE FIRING-LINE

They have stopt at the roadside during their march to the front

method, which was the usual way, and was much more conservative, and much safer. The wisdom of the British decision was shown in the fighting on the fifth and sixth days, when the Germans were perceptibly slowing up.

It was estimated that in the attacks delivered in mass formation more than 400,000 out of nearly a million Germans were dead, wounded, or in the hands of their foes. The hills, plains, and valleys of Picardy were red with German blood. About twenty-five miles represented the point of greatest penetration made at any one place. It was thought not improbable that British and French reserves, and possibly American troops now known to have been assembled behind the battle-front, would soon be thrown against the weakened enemy. The Germans continued their onslaught southwestward against French defenses in the region of Roye and Noyon, having slowed down in their attempt to cut through the British line further north, where desperate resistance had been offered. There were many indications that the German High Command was attempting to split the Allied front and start a rolling-up process either way. The appalling slaughter of the attacking masses continued. One reassuring sign was that the Germans were beginning to use old troops in continuing the assault. The first stage of the battle was over on the seventh day.

Battles of this size were now fought in chapters, and the first chapter of this German battle of the Somme had closed on March 27, when the great offensive became broken into a string of separate battles. The conflict might still go on all summer, as the battle of Verdun did after it was launched in February, but men now reckoned up results at the end of each chapter. Germany's title for this first chapter was "a glorious victory." She had taken a vast number of guns, tanks, and prisoners, and had retaken most of the territory the British took from her the year before in their own battle of the Somme. The booty taken and the destruction of life were the real achievements and both had been great. But in this war a battle was only a victory when it achieved what it set out to get; and the first chapter of the German battle of the Somme ended without getting for Germany what she

had set out to get. Pushing back the British did not bring the end of the war any nearer. Shattering the British, and then breaking the British line, would have been a different matter, but that was precisely what Germany had not done. She had merely forced an indomitable line to move back, and it still faced her as stiff and rigid as ever. From the standpoint of getting what you want, the first chapter of this battle was a failure for the Germans, dismal, and complete. Haig had not brought his striking armies into action at all; he had used only his defensive armies. He had, in other words, used just enough power to ward off the blow without returning it. While using one arm to protect his face, he retreated and never brought the other arm into action. Germany wanted him to use both arms, but he was keeping the other arm for use later in a better place. Meanwhile he meant to let Germany spend her strength.

"A great battle has been fought and victory won, but nobody can foresee what will result from it," said Ludendorff to a German newspaper at this time. Ludendorff, not Hindenburg, had planned this German offensive. It was significant that the organizer of the "victory" showed no confidence in its ultimate results. General Maurice, then the British Director of Military Operations, described the situation on the seventh day as "less critical than at any time in the last three days," and Clemenceau, now the French Premier, was quoted from Paris as saying that "within forty-eight hours the Allies will be master of the situation." There was nothing to indicate that British reserves had been used in any considerable number. All the plans of the German General Staff still hinged upon successes that had not been gained in seven days of the fiercest fighting the human race had ever known. The single thing the Germans had not succeeded in doing was to break down the continuity of the British and French line, or destroy the forces on their front by weight of blow. Just as the French troops who were holding the line in front of Verdun hung on until Pétain arrived with his reserve army, so the British hung on, striking and retreating for the first week until they saw a slowing down of the German pace, due, perhaps in part,

to difficulties of transport and the growing weariness of men, but in part to the stiffening of British resistance.

The odds further south against the French had been great. There were times when one regiment had to hold a front of five miles, times when three divisions had to stand against thirty. The French were flung into the fight, said one observer, "as hurriedly as firemen are called out for an alarming conflagration." Three divisions in the first line were fighting five times their number, and fifteen more German divisions were in reserve, and constantly coming up. German troops were never engaged more than forty-eight hours at a stretch, while for the French there was no rest. On March 30 one battalion of the French line, with a few odd men from other units, successfully resisted five attacks by the Ninth Division and reduced the number of efficients in some of its companies to twenty. On this part of the line the battle fought during the last four days of March was one of the great stands of the war.[6]

On the British line light tanks, known as "whippets," were here used for the first time. Officially they were known as "medium" tanks to distinguish them from the heavy tank that had been used for two years. The new tank was a far more mobile machine, armed with only four machine-guns, and especially intended to act as an auxiliary to infantry. Its armor permitted the machine-guns in it to be brought up safely to quite close ranges, and so allowed a powerful fire to be brought to bear. It afforded complete protection against shrapnel bullets, rifle-fire, and shell-splinters. Only a direct hit from a field-gun high-explosive shell could put it out of action, chances so few in number that they could be neglected. The "whippet" was far more speedy than the ordinary tank. Many stories were told of its chasing individuals, and generally behaving like a whippet-dog after a rabbit. The ordinary tank, known officially as the "heavy," consisted of "male" and "female," differing only in armament. The "male" was armed with two 6 pounder Hotchkiss guns and four machine-guns; the "female" had only six machine-guns.

German strategy had conceived that, once a gap between

[6] Gerald Campbell in a cable dispatch to The *Sun* (New York).

AMIENS CATHEDRAL

the British and the French was opened, the advance of the victors would be so rapid that there never could be a reunion between the two ends of the Allied armies. When this reunion did occur at Montdidier on March 27, the only chance remaining of immediate and complete German victory was to break down the grip of the two armies. This explained the severe fighting from Montdidier north to Albert, but as the grip held fast there was no further considerable German push westward. To effect and hold this reunion was the main purpose of Allied strategy. The Germans had advanced so far and so fast, out-running their heavy guns and munitions, that they were unable to break the line, thin tho it was, which held the two ends of the Allied forces together. They tried this incessantly, but only with local successes, and, meantime, the French reserves continued to flow up and the line of the Allies at the danger-point grew thicker and stronger. The link between the French and British had been broken. Unless it had been restored, the main purpose of the German offensive would have been accomplished.

Foch, who had become the General-in-Chief of the Allied armies, late in March showed how he was equal to the occasion when he brought up reserve troops, and sent them across the Oise to fill the gap left by Gough's retreat. While they arrived too late to check the advance to the Somme, they came in time to restore connection between the Allies and block the way to Paris. Twice before in the war had Foch saved a critical situation, once on the Marne, and afterward at Ypres, but never before had his powers of strategy been put to so severe a test as when, on this occasion, he kept the Anglo-French line intact and saved Paris from the menace of German occupation. The French had saved the British as Blücher had saved Wellington at Waterloo. Had the French not intervened—had Foch not been in full command—the Germans would probably have realized in the first week the main purpose of their strategy; they would have driven the British, so far as the Fifth Army was concerned, north of the Somme and out of touch with the French. Gough's failure had not only opened a gap between the British and French, but had uncovered the

main roads to Paris. The French thus had to rush troops in order to cover Paris; they had also to get in front of the German push when it was rapidly reaching a point where a restoration of contact would have been impossible.

It was not until March 26 that French troops got around the corner and in front of the extreme point of the German wedge. By this time the Germans had passed Montdidier and begun to climb the narrow plateau between the Avre and the Noye, where ran the main railroad from Paris to the north. For several days the Germans continued to assail this thin line, which was the life-line of the Allied Armies, but the French held, and by April 1 the Germans were forced to abandon their immediate efforts to break up the connection. They had temporarily come to the end of their strength when they reached thirty-five miles from their starting-point. The bad roads behind them were now rendered far worse by a rainstorm that intervened. Perhaps if it had not rained they might have got through, just as Victor Hugo and other French writers insisted that Napoleon would have won at Waterloo if it had not rained the night before and so delayed the French attack next morning. Seeking a Sedan or a Waterloo, the Germans had won a colossal battlefield triumph, which, as it stood, was a brilliant local success; but it was lacking in decisive consequences. The most gigantic blow of the whole war had been parried and at least momentarily blocked within a distance of thirty-five miles from the starting-place and without the loss to the Allies of any vital point in their system of defense or the destruction of any of their armies. The Germans so far had succeeded only in winning back from the British and French a little less than a thousand square miles of blood-soaked and utterly devastated country.

And yet for that whole week the Germans had seen the world within their grasp; Frenchmen had looked ruin in the face; Englishmen wondered if the course of history had not turned against them, while Americans knew the humiliation of being unable on the firing-line to help friends whose lives as well their own were at stake. The German blow was in fact a worse episode for the Entente than the retreat to the Marne in 1914, for at the Marne British armies had not to

any real extent been enrolled; Russian armies were still far away from the front; America and Italy were not yet in the war. But now the Entente world had summoned all its forces against the Germans, and if the battle were lost the world itself might be lost. Memory of those dark days in March, 1918, promised to hurt so long as those who lived

AMERICAN SOLDIERS GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH THEIR FRENCH COMRADES

through them remained alive. The first really good news was not to come until the beginning of the second week, when on March 28 a great German assault on the British buttress at Arras was stopt and on both flanks the Germans were held; their offensive narrowing day by day, pushing down in a point toward Amiens, and finally stopt in front of the city.

Hard blows were to come afterward in Flanders in April, on the Aisne in May, toward Compiègne in June, and sometimes the danger was to be almost as great as in March; but the blackness of those first March days of the Ludendorff offensive was never to return. This war probably could not have been won—at least not in 1918—except for the Americans who in June and July fought on the Marne and afterward in the Argonne, but we had to remember that if French and British troops had not stopt the Germans in March, our men might never have had a chance in July, September, and October to do their part in the great redemption of the world. One year later, the former Supreme War Lord, who in March, 1918, had declared he would have no "soft peace," was celebrating at a lonely manor house or "castle" in Holland, the sawing of his thousandth log of wood. Except for the stedfastness and courage of the men who fought his armies at the end of March and the beginning of April in 1918, before Amiens, Arras, and Montdidier, he might have spent the month of March, 1919, very differently in Berlin.[7]

[7] Principal Sources: The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, The *Journal of Commerce* (New York), The London *Times*' "History of the War." The *Evening Post*, The *Times*, The *World*, New York; The Paris *Petit Parisien*, The *Evening Sun* (New York), The Berlin *Lokal-Anzeiger*, The *Tribune*, *The Sun*, New York; *The Fortnightly Review* (London), Associated Press dispatches.

## II

## THE DRIVE FAILS AGAIN AT ARRAS AND ON THE OISE

### March 29, 1918—April 7, 1918

IN the last days of March and first days of April the struggle entered upon another phase. While the fighting along the center, toward Amiens, came practically to a standstill, two violent assaults broke out elsewhere, one initiated by the Germans in the north, the other by the French in the south. The Germans had still to undertake the most dangerous part of their offensive, or give up the fight. This was because in both north and south they had to avoid the danger of being cut off on a flank, so that in both cases their aim now became essentially defensive. Their advance had been pushed so far forward that it bulged out under the heights of Vimy Ridge, the taking of which by the Canadians the year before had been a task which made the place a proverb for slaughter. When Germany now sent her bleeding legions against these heights already many times stained with much blood, it was because she had to do so. At one point she carried British outposts, but generally she was held back, her assault failing to move with the irresistible rush that had swept the British before her a week before. Even if she could have driven the British back in the same fashion now as then, the stroke would have been a mere preliminary success in the far more terrible task of recovering Vimy Ridge and the heights of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette.

In the Oise section the Germans at the same time had driven ahead so far that they gave the French an opportunity of cutting them off, and Foch promptly seized it on a line ten miles long. Here a different situation had arisen because the Germans in a great rush had been carried along as far west as Montdidier, and the result was to leave that part of this German army sticking out well in advance of

the main line. The promptness with which Pétain, under Foch, as soon as the Germans had taken Montdidier, struck his blow, showed how closely Foch had been watching for his chance. His action was eloquent proof that the French had not been defeated, even tho they had given ground.

The German attack on the British at Arras was prepared on a scale of great strength by divisions arranged in depths, and was preceded by a bombardment as intense as that which fell upon any part of the British line on the morning of March 21. The brunt of the attack, preceded by colossal gun-fire, fell upon London troops, against whom the German tide dashed and broke. By artillery-fire, machine-gun fire, and rifle-fire, advancing waves of Germans were swept to pieces, and altho they came forward again and again, the massacre continued until at last it must have sickened even high German officers who were directing the operation. It became an utter defeat; the day Hindenburg had boastfully set for entering Paris, April 1, found Ludendorff's armies checked at all points, and at some points actually thrown back.

The Arras attack was meant to constitute as great an enterprise as the initial attack of March. At least seven German divisions were engaged north of the river in an effort to take Vimy Ridge while British troops to the south were attacked by three divisions. There was some artillery preparation, but the method of advance, in dense infantry formations, was exactly the same as in the earlier phases of the great drive. From a naked plain, the Germans had not only to make a drive for Vimy, but to support an attack against Arras on both banks of the Scarpe. They began by blowing most of the forward posts of the British out of existence. Barrage was then shuffled about in an unusual way, from one post to another. Gas-shells sought out batteries and trench-mortars began to gnaw at wire.

When the British had withdrawn to their main line of defense, they met the principal German waves which came plowing unsteadily and slowly across the open. Emerging from three villages, they first described zigzag lines, weighted down as they were with equipment like pack-mules so that they could not move easily through craters and tangled wire.

Each man carried six days' rations, two blankets, an extra pair of boots, wire-cutters, bombs and ammunition. Not even the first objective was attained at Arras and not a yard of the ridge was taken. As they came on deliberately, they were mowed down like sheep. Londoners who fought here were far quicker of action than their heavy-laden foes. When the flood poured over the first parapet and through the broken wire, which soon was tangled with corpses, the British gave up their trenches and fought from the further side. They fell back a yard at a time, throwing bombs and firing rifles sometimes from points so close that they drove scorched cloth into gray figures tightly wedged along narrow alleys. Those who fell never got up again. Others, carried down by the collapse of their comrades, lay helpless, their heavy kits weighing them down, and were trampled over as they met their death.

The desperation of the German staff became apparent about mid-day when fresh waves were launched to attain the preliminary goal which they had hoped to reach early in the morning. Altho failure had been apparent in the early hours, the Germans refused to recognize it until nearly sunset, when the most persistent of German divisions had advanced barely a mile over ground covered with dead. They could not keep even this slender gain, for the higher ground behind them was alive with tongues of flame from machine-guns that spat from every crater. To the British it was like sitting at a window and shooting into a crowded street. Broken and disheartened, the Germans fell back in the darkness across the furrowed ground.[8]

Armies that could hold up an enemy in this fashion, just at the height of his advance, were as far as possible from being defeated. If the object of the German drive had been to rout the Allies, and not merely to push them back a little, we now had clear evidence that their drive had failed. A victory of that kind was no victory at all, in the sense in which Germany needed victories. The war had long passed the stage where a merely technical success was of any advantage to her.

Out of the confusion of battle and contrary claims, two

[8] Percival Phillips in a dispatch to The *Sun* (New York).

features stood forth. The first was that the French, over a front of six miles, had driven themselves into the German lines; the other, that the Germans, in beginning a new operation east of Arras, were widening the area of battle northward. There was no reason yet to believe that Ludendorff had increased his prospects of winning the essential element in his super-offensive. Every effort he made to draw in Entente reserves had failed. His line had been compelled to take an increasingly precarious shape, and he was draining his reserves past the point of safety. The ninth day found the battle-front grown to nearly twice its original length, or from fifty to ninety or a hundred miles. From Arleux, north of Arras, to Albert, the British lines still held stubbornly and at a number of points had thrust back the Germans. Hills west of Montdidier were still held by the French, and a French counter-attack from Lassigny to Noyon was going on. The extreme depth of the German wedge was now about thirty-seven miles.

With the passing of the thirteenth day the German machine seemed almost to have spent itself. Where previously men had been thrown into the fray, not counting the prodigious wastage in killed or wounded, the Germans were declining to give battle. With the reserves of the Entente virtually intact and with the added weight Pershing's troops would soon give, the turn in the tide of the battle seemed appreciably near at hand. Daily the German losses in men killed or wounded continued to augment as details were obtained from prisoners. Some divisions, when they charged in mass formation against machine-gunners and riflemen, lost as high as 70 per cent. of their effectives. Certain companies withdrew from the fighting with their combative strength reduced to forty men. On April 2 the Germans were still bringing up guns and counting their dead. The frightful price paid for reoccupation of the Somme territory had become fully apparent, but fresh divisions were still waiting their turn.

Figures selected at random gave an idea of the German wastage. The losses of their Two Hundred and Eighth Division since March 21 had amounted to 70 per cent. (8,400 men). The Twentieth Division had lost over 50 per cent.

THE RUINS OF ARRAS CATHEDRAL

(more than 6,000 men). The loss had not only fallen upon men in the ranks, but officers had been sacrificed. Few officers were left in the attacking regiments. The Fiftieth Reserve Division was annihilated (12,000 men). The Eighty-third Division lost 20 per cent. of its strength on the first day and an additional 40 per cent. of the original total stationed at Mezières on March 19 (8,400 men). The average company strength of the First Division was reduced 40 per cent. (4,800). The Fifth Division lost 50 per cent. of its strength at Ham, and more in crossing the Somme (more than 6,000 men). Figures for nine divisions picked at random for illustrative purposes showed that out of a total theoretical infantry strength of 108,000 men, the Germans

FRENCH OFFICIAL PHOTO. © COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION.

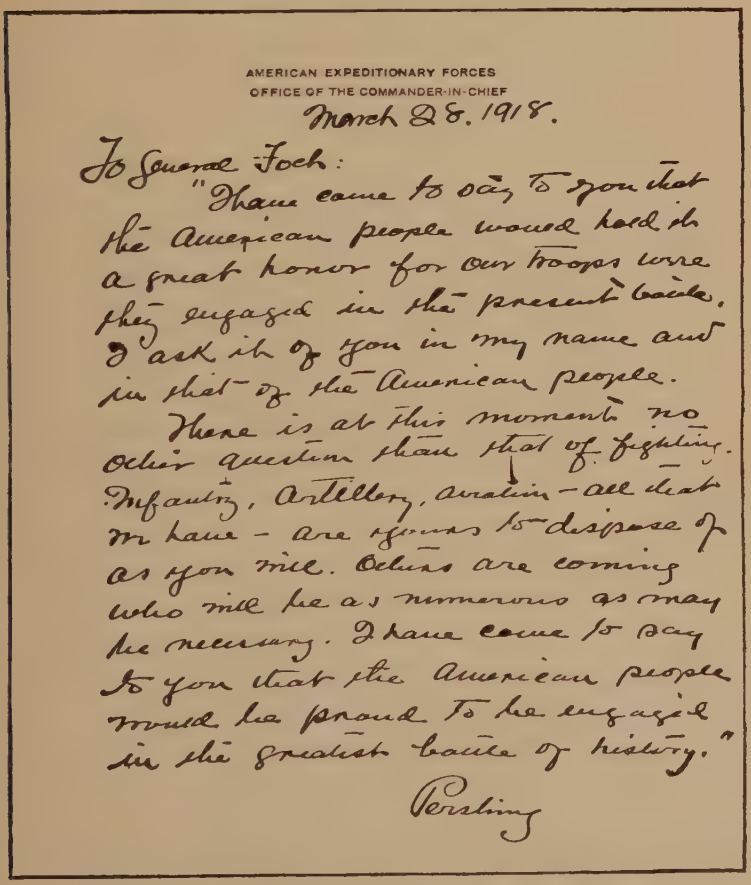
GENERAL FAYOLLE CONGRATULATING AN OFFICER FOR SUCCESS IN BATTLE

since March 4 had lost 57,400 to gain the territory they reoccupied.[9] That German casualties had averaged from 30 to 50 per cent. in all the divisions engaged was not thought to be exaggerated. On that basis, if one reckoned from 3,000 to 4,000 in each of eighty divisions, one would arrive at some conjectural total of infantry losses alone as from 240,000 to 320,000. Probably never since the first days of the war had so many Germans been killed. Rifles and machine-guns had targets at ranges of from 500 yards downward. In the early stage of the battle some machine-guns engulfed wave after wave of Germans trying to advance along a dip in the ground. British who told of this became almost hysterical. At one stage of the battle the Germans attacked in force eight separate times in two days, and were thrown back every time while the British line held intact.

To this offensive the Kaiser had invited every German newspaper—even the Socialist paper *Vorwärts*—to send a correspondent, that the final victory might be given in detail to an anxious people. Civilians from day to day were allowed to see maps showing captured territory; lines where the German wedge drove back the English; thrice conquered villages that had been the sport of war. For a week Germany was made happy and joyful. Victory, however, did not come. Instead came many long trains bringing the wreckage of armies that had won back dust-heap towns in France. The Germans still had men by tens of thousands, and would use them unsparingly in their effort to conquer; for they had gone too far to stop. In fact, their own press had condemned them to failure if, in their final effort, they did not reach their goal. They had to go on and live or die from the results of a battle they themselves initiated on ground selected by themselves. The German people unquestionably had expected a decisive result from Ludendorff's first smashing blow, and they were still hoping for great things from a second, but this hope was restrained by fear. There seemed no doubt that a feeling of acute anxiety was taking the place of the elation which previously existed in the Fatherland.

[9] Percival Phillips in a dispatch to The *Sun* (New York).

During his visit to Italy, a few weeks before the Germans began the March 21 offensive, Foch had met Lloyd George at Rapello on the Riviera, at a conference in which representatives of Britain, France, and Italy took part. Both civilian and military leaders were present, and an important decision arrived at. This was the formation of an Inter-Allied Supreme War Council, which was to secure, if not unity of command, at least a general unity of direction on



AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
March 28. 1918.

To General Foch:

"I have come to say to you that the American people would hold it a great honor for our troops were they engaged in the present battle. I ask it of you in my name and in that of the American people.

There is at this moment no other question than that of fighting. Infantry, Artillery, aviation - all that we have - are yours to dispose of as you will. Others are coming who will be as numerous as may be necessary. I have come to say to you that the American people would be proud to be engaged in the greatest battle of history."

Pershing

PERSHING'S LETTER TO FOCH, OFFERING HIM "ALL THAT WE HAVE"

the Western Front, this front to include the Italian lines on the Piave and in the Trentino. It was a first step in an evolution by which Foch had now become Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the west. On March 30th Entente armies for the first time since the war began were fighting under the control of a single commander. President Wilson had sent a personal cablegram of congratulation to Foch, and Pershing had placed at his disposal all the American forces on French soil. Foch had supreme command over all the men on the battle-lines, and, in addition, command of a strategic reserve force, the size and location of which were not known, but which, judging from reports, was very large. Pershing, calling on General Foch at headquarters, had said to him:

"I come to say to you that the American people would hold it a great honor for our troops were they engaged in the present battle. I ask it of you in my name and in that of the American people. There is at this moment no other question than that of fighting. Infantry, artillery, aviation—all that we have—are yours to dispose of them as you will. Others are coming which are as numerous as will be necessary. I have come to say to you that the American people would be proud to be engaged in the greatest battle in history."

On that historic event in America's share in the war, Colonel Palmer related how it was on the morning of March 28, that Pershing, having received President Wilson's approval, hurried to Foch, whom he found "in his garden at headquarters"—which meant Doullens, fifteen miles southwest of Arras—took him by the arm, and walking to one side, informally speaking in French, as commander of the American Army, offered to Foch "all our troops and all our material in France." Informal as this was, Pershing's words were written out afterward as they were remembered, and when published thrilled all France and all America." Coming at the same time as the President's congratulations to Foch the public saw that the unity of command which had long been talked of had now been actually accomplished. In our Revolution, Rochambeau placed himself under Washington's orders as Pershing had now placed himself under

Foch's. Every military consideration had favored this concentration of authority.[10] But political and other conditions had stood in the way.

Even after Lloyd George, following the Isonzo break-down, had committed himself to the theory of a single command, he could not carry the British Government with him. It needed Ludendorff to furnish the final arguments to overcome British hesitation. In placing American with French and British forces under Foch, Lloyd George now explained that the decision to do so was the outcome of a definite proposal submitted to President Wilson by the British Government at the time when they had the advantage of seeing in London, Secretary of War Baker, two or three days after the March 21 battle began. Mr. Balfour and Lloyd George then had a long conversation with Mr. Baker on the whole situation, and submitted certain recommendations which Mr. Baker transmitted to President Wilson, with strong support of them from Premier Clemenceau. They provided for putting the combatant strength of the American Army into action under Foch during the period of this battle, inasmuch as there was no hope of the Americans coming up in time as a strong separate army. By this decision the American battalions were brigaded with those of the Allies. When this proposal was formally submitted to President Wilson by Lord Reading in Washington, on behalf of the British Government, President Wilson assented without hesitation, and arrangements were at once made for the fighting strength of the American Army to be immediately brought to bear in the struggle. Out of the success of this arrangement came a later decision to place the British also under Foch.

The decision to place Foch in command of all the Allied armies really dated back, not only to the conference in Italy, but to the creation of an Inter-Allied Council in November, 1917—at least the decision was a logical outcome of that action. For this conference which met in Paris, the United States sent to Europe a group of men to represent the War, Navy, and Treasury Departments as well as other administrative branches, with Colonel Edward M. House at their head. Preliminary to the conference, a historic meet-

[10] "America in France" (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

ing of the American delegates and the British War Cabinet had occurred in London, on November 20, at the old residence in Downing Street which had served prime ministers of Great Britain for many generations both as residence and office. The room used for the meeting was the Council Chamber, where cabinets meet and where the destinies of the British Empire had been shaped before and since the time of the American Revolution. At the very table at which the draft of the Stamp Act was approved, these delegates from the United States now met members of the War Cabinet of Great Britain. Lloyd George, in a short speech, referred felicitously to the historic character of the gathering and to the memories which the room called up. It is a plain, unpretentious chamber, in size about thirty-five by twenty feet, looking out on the Premier's garden, which at this time was almost completely filled by a temporary office-building used by his secretaries. The main feature of the room was a long mahogany table, around which every British Cabinet had sat for at least 200 years.

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SECRETARY OF WAR BAKER

Students of modern history recalled a conference to which the one now to be assembled in Paris offered a close parallel, the one which met at Chaumont in eastern France in February, 1814, when representatives of Great Britain, Prussia, Austria and Russia sought for new means to overthrow Napoleon. The meeting of Chaumont came together under the shadow of defeat; at Montmirail, Champaubert, and Vauchamps Napoleon had given final proof of his great military capacity. The men who gathered at Chaumont in 1814 had seen unmistakable signs that Prussia, whose army had just been routed, and Austria, who also had suffered a heavy defeat, were ready to retire from French soil and

make a peace of submission. But Alexander of Russia and the British representative, Lord Castlereagh, lost neither heart nor hope, and under their influence was drafted at Chaumont a treaty which soon determined Napoleon's fate. By its terms the four allies bound themselves to fight on

THE FAMOUS "DOWNING STREET" IN LONDON
For several generations the British Prime Minister has had his home and office in this building

until France was restored to her ancient limits, those of 1792. Each pledged itself to keep 150,000 men in the field, while Great Britain promised in addition a great financial contribution. The treaty was signed on March 1 and a month later the allies were in Paris. On April 6 Napoleon abdicated at Fontainebleau. Men of 1917, with faith in the Allied cause, saw in this new congress, assembling in the face of another imperialistic peril, after three years of

struggle against a common danger, a repetition of the action taken at Chaumont, as presaging similar consequences to the foe. Chaumont, it is pleasing to recall, became in the World War the headquarters of General Pershing, and there went President Wilson in December, 1918, to review the troops of which he was commander-in-chief.

The hurried visit to Italy of Lloyd George and Painlevé, then Premier of France, but whom Clemenceau was soon to succeed, accompanied by military representatives, resulted in the creation of an Inter-Allied Supreme War Council, and led to the appointment, as military members of the Council, of General Foch, then Chief of Staff of the French War Ministry; General Wilson, sub-chief of the British General Staff, and General Cadorna, lately Commander-in-Chief of the Italian armies. The reasons for the creation of this Council were stated with much frankness by Lloyd George in Paris when on his way home from Italy. He said that national and professional traditions, questions of prestige and national susceptibilities, had all conspired to hamper decisions by the Allies. The war, he said, had been "prolonged by particularism," but it could be shortened by "soldier solidarity." If the efforts under way to organize for united action should become a reality, he had no doubt as to the issue of the war. M. Painlevé declared that the program requisite for future victory was "a single front, a single army, a single nation." Lloyd George's speech gave rise at that time to a great amount of criticism in England, which found expression in speeches by Former Premier Asquith and others in the House of Commons. An occasion arose which was thought by some to mark a crisis in Lloyd George's parliamentary career, but after a speech by him in Parliament it resulted in an apparently complete triumph. These occurrences had taken place a few days before the arrival in England of the War Commission from the United States, headed by Colonel House.

Since the beginning of the war, efforts to some extent effective, for singleness of plan and control, had been under way by the British and French in notable London conferences. Cooperation in 1914 had been almost wholly lacking. At Mons French and Joffre had attempted to cooperate,

but the result was a failure. Joffre, when obliged to retire from the Belgian border in the face of the main German attack, had warned French in time for the British to have fallen back and made the two fronts conform, but General French hung on a day too long, and in the subsequent retreat lost a large part of his command. The error did not argue any grave fault on French's part, for he was not under Joffre's orders, nor did he have access to information possest by his Allies, or to many details of the situation, and so he had acted independently. It was only the excellence of his troops and the fighting they did under Haig and Smith-Dorrien that enabled the British to escape and secure the protection of Paris. When Foch and Joffre a few days later were driving the Germans back from the Marne, French had learned his lesson and his men—the few he had left—now took their places in the battle-line in cooperation with the armies of France.

It took the virtual annihilation of Serbia, in 1915, to teach the Entente the need of real cooperation. Even then it was France that first saw the need and dispatched to Saloniki the force that saved Greece for the Entente, and then Britain, having learned her lesson, shipped part of her Gallipoli force to Saloniki and afterward cooperated there. The different armies had, however, still to be standardized to one military system, in order to work together as a team. Eventually Great Britain managed to conform her organization to that of the French, but it was a slow process during which battles and a staggering number of soldiers were lost. Co-organization was not finally realized until the successful operations of 1916 on the Somme. Italy had begun her brilliant attack on Austria in 1915, virtually as a free-lance. It was only somewhat later that, in any formal sense, she became an ally of the Entente, and even then she had not declared war on Germany; failing which she could not consistently ask her Allies to help her in her plans against Austria. In Italy's mishap at Carporetto in October, 1917, we saw, not the downfall of an Allied cooperation, but the downfall of a serious hindrance to an understanding that would permit of cooperation. When American forces were put abreast of those of Britain and France, and all

were directed by common counsels, which had standardized a fighting system in the field, the new era of a genuine and effective cooperation had first been opened.

That the Supreme War Council should hold its meetings in Versailles was a fact that had deep historical significance. Here was the place where Bismarck had had the German Empire proclaimed, and here now, after nearly half a century, representatives of all the western nations had gathered to make plans for the protection of the world against an Empire born at Versailles. For Americans indeed the event had another and as deep a meaning. In Versailles, in 1783, was signed the treaty of peace which recognized the independence of the United States. A century and a third afterward this America had now returned to Europe to meet in Versailles, France, an ancient ally, and Great Britain, a former foe, in order to unite with them in a new struggle for the same idea and the same ideals as those they had fought for successfully nearly a century and a half before.

A perplexing and delicate matter for the Council to define was the relations between the Supreme War Council, which began its sittings at Versailles on December 1, immediately at the close of a conference in Paris, and the commanders-in-chief of the French, British, Italian, and American armies. Leading French newspapers insisted upon the need of an Inter-Allied Generalissimo and behind all discussion, as the man for the post—presuming the post to be created—stood Marshal Joffre. He was the only French General who at one time had successfully exercised a controlling influence over the British Army—first at the Marne, and later when the Germans in Flanders made their great attempt to get Calais. Antagonism to the Marshal existed, however, among radical elements in the French Chamber, who distrusted his supposed dislike of Parliamentary overlordship in the domain of military affairs. On assembling at Versailles, the Supreme War Council was composed of the new French Premier, Clemenceau, Premier Lloyd George, Premier Orlando, and Colonel E. M. House, chairman of the American delegation. M. Clemenceau presided at the preliminary conference. Meanwhile the military advisers of France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States were to continue their

discussions, in order to formulate a definite policy for complete cooperation on the Western Front. In these discussions Colonel House, acting for President Wilson, had marked influence in bringing about unity of command under Foch. The Allies were now to fight Germany as one power under a working plan finally agreed upon, with greater unity of con-

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HAVING TEA AT VERSAILLES

The picture represents a meeting of the Supreme War Council in the spring of 1918. At the central table is Lloyd George (with his hand in his pocket) and Mr. Balfour at his right

trol in the armies on the Western Front, including Italy. But it was not until after Ludendorff began his great offensive in March that this unity of control was definitely effected by conferring on Foch the rank of generalissimo.

Foch as well as Joffre had immortalized himself at the Marne. He was above all things an open-war strategist. France had the

utmost confidence in him. "The greatest strategist in Europe and the humblest," Joffre had called him. Together Joffre and Foch were the two foremost living French soldiers. Foch had been at Morhange; he had broken the German center at the Marne, had led the French, British, and Belgians in the first battle of Ypres, had won the battle of Artois in May and June, 1915, had commanded the French forces in the battle of the Somme, and recently had been chief of staff of all the French armies. Joffre and Foch were born in the French Pyrenees within a few miles and within three months of each other—Foch at Tarbes, in the department of Hautes-Pyrenees, on October 2, 1851, and Joffre in Pyrenees-Orientales, on January 12, 1852. Foch came of a Basque family; Joffre was a Catalan.

In the opening days of the war Foch was in Lorraine, where he served under Castelnau at the battle of Morhange, but was soon called west to organize a new army, hastily formed, with which he was to fight his most famous battle, La Fère-Champenoise, the decisive phase of the Battle of the Marne. Foch had once said laughingly in regard to his name, that he, "by the grace of God just escaped being a German." Altho born at Tarbes, some of his early life before the war of 1870 was spent in Metz. The name Foch was not German, but a corruption of Foix. More than 100,000 Americans, intensively trained and fully accoutred, were now available for immediate use under Foch, and many of them, on railroad trains and in motor-trucks, and even afoot, were on their way to the battle-front. With Foch made generalissimo, Pétain kept command of the French armies in the field. Pétain's position with reference to the French was essentially the same as Haig's with reference to the British armies. When Foch "touched the button, they did the rest."

So great had been the losses of the Germans north of the Somme that they were unwilling for a time to take up the gage of battle again. Along the Scarpe the British themselves took the offensive, and east of Arras captured the village of Feuchy. On the southern end of the line, where Ludendorff was endeavoring to pierce through to the old German positions as they stood before the summer retreat

in 1916. British and French troops, fighting together, met the Germans in furious combats, and everywhere defeated them. The town of Moreuil changed hands four times, but finally rested with the British and French, while the woods north of the village were captured by the French. In the bend of the line between Moreuil and Lassigny, the Germans made frantic efforts to break through, but the French held them in their tracks and recaptured several villages. Not alone had Ludendorff lost large numbers of men killed or wounded, but both British and French took a considerable number of new prisoners and captured machine-guns.

After several days of comparative inactivity, bitter fighting was resumed on April 4 along the western sector of the salient. Attacks yielded some gains to the invaders just east of Amiens. Fighting was heaviest in the neighborhood of Hamel, where the British were forced back slightly, and in the triangle formed by the Rivers Luce and Avre. Further to the south the French were forced to give ground. Reports mentioned heavy rains, which meant that the Germans were working under a severe handicap in bringing up guns, ammunition, and supplies. The battlefield over which the Allies retreated was left with roads and bridges mined. After three days of relative idleness, this battle broke out again with all the strength which the German command could put behind it. They had been checked, but they had to go on. To stop after all the advertising their offensive had received would have been to acknowledge defeat. Their effort had cost hundreds of thousands of their best effectives and they could not explain away this sacrifice, or justify it by the gains of territory. World power or downfall was still the issue.

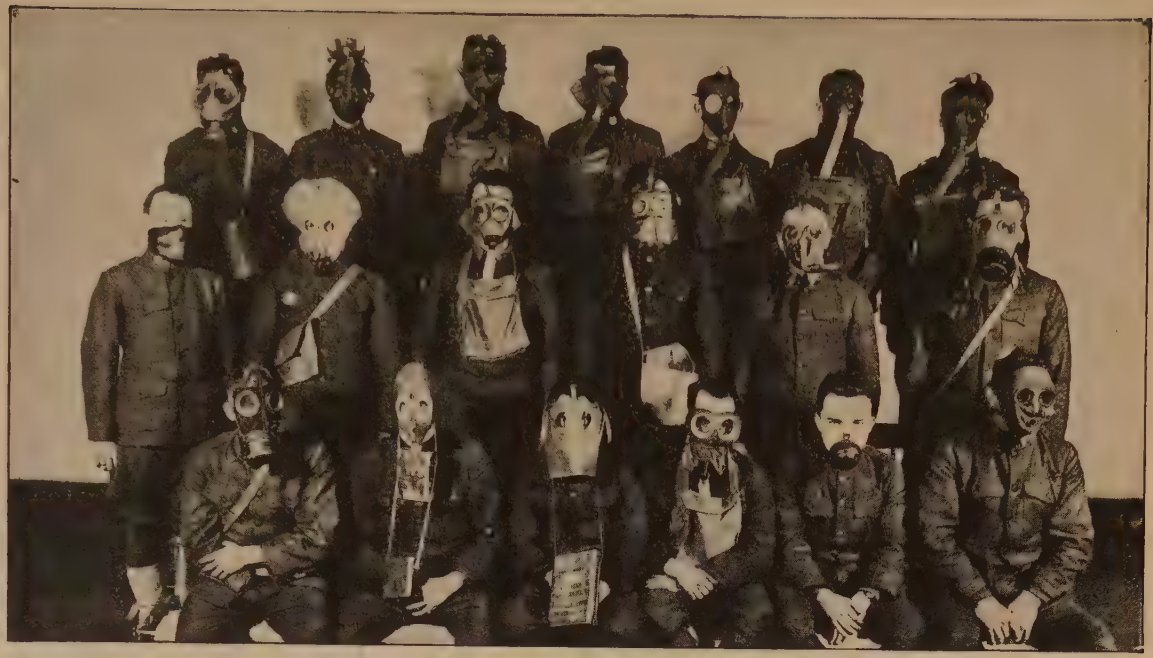
As the battle stood, Germany had lost two important advantages; those of surprize and initiative. The Allies at the time Germany launched her attack, had not dared to concentrate against it. They were pinned to their positions, not only until the attack was launched, but until it had developed to the point where it was positively established that it was not a diversion to distract attention from some other quarter of the field. Only then could the Allies begin to collect their reserves to meet the danger. The British and

French, altho wearied by incessant fighting, stood their ground and brought Germany to a halt. There could be no further surprize, because the battle-ground was now fixt. Germany had to attack between certain limits which she herself had imposed. It would do her no good to open the fight outside those limits, for if she did, she would only scatter her efforts in such way that nothing would be gained anywhere.

Moreover, this was not the German way. Germany had begun every attack with a fixt objective. She had kept hammering at this objective until she either took it or was defeated. There was no flexibility either in the German military machine, or in the German plan. Both were the products of the German mind, which was in itself inflexible. For these reasons, Germany had lost the initiative and the Allies now massed to meet attacks. Not only had they gathered men but, with shorter lines of communication and with better transportation facilities, since Germany had to bring up supplies over the ground she herself had laid waste, they were able to rush to the front vast supplies of guns and ammunition. Germany had to rely solely on the brute strength of her men and on their ability, man for man, to outfight British, French, and Americans. And man for man the German soldier was inferior to the soldier fighting against him.[11]

On April 5 the Germans were hurling massed divisions against British and French lines from North of Albert to a short distance north of Montdidier. Probably there had not been a more sanguinary battle fought since the beginning of the offensive on March 21. It had for its objective the driving of a wedge between the British and French, the cutting of the Paris-Amiens Railroad south of Amiens and the capture of Amiens. In spite of the power of attack, the Allied legions stood firm over the most of the front. At only two points were they forced to give ground, and these were minor successes when compared with the sacrifice of German lives. The Allies seemed now to have abandoned their Fabian tactics. They had fixt their lines about twelve miles east of Amiens. The contour of the back country lent itself to defensive tactics, being quite high and of a

[11] The New York *Times* "Military Expert."



VARIOUS TYPES OF GAS-MASKS USED IN THE WAR

character which compelled attacking forces to expose themselves to concentration of fire from artillery and infantry. It had become necessary for the Germans to break through the British and French lines in this region, or to outflank them by a drive north and south of it. The repulse of this second great assault put the British and French in fine spirits. They had held strong positions, were well supplied with ammunition, and had a reserve army under command of the French strategist.

Much was written, at this time, about the Reserve Army, which Foch was assumed to have under his command. There was no great doubt that such an army existed. There was no other way to account for the troops which had not yet been thrown into the fighting. The fact that they had not been used meant little, for the game was a big one, the stakes tremendous, and a false move might be fatal. Foch had first to know clearly the strength of the Germans as well as his own strength. He could not guess, but must know, whether he could hold the Germans back without drawing in his army of maneuver. The Germans had lost a great many men. They were losing more daily and losing them at a rapid rate. Their attack on April 5, a major effort in every particular, while it achieved certain gains in territory, had been ruinous. French artillery and infantry had decimated their infantry and they had nothing to show for the sacrifice. If, then, Foch could pick his time and pick it without error, he could undo much that Germany had accomplished. If, however, he threw in his full reserve strength in an effort to check the German advance, he might play his last card and have nothing with which to strike back and ward off another blow. German attacks would continue, because Germany could not stop. Hindenburg was to have been in Paris by April 1. To stop after giving such publicity to his plans would have been to accept and acknowledge defeat.

There was still another danger in Russia; in fact, the situation there was not all to Germany's liking. The Russians were unsettled, dissatisfied, and beginning to organize a new army of resistance. Large elements had never accepted the peace terms and never would. The Russians had taken Odessa, and thereby broken the link by which Germany

hoped to tie the Near East to herself and open up a route to India. The Turkish fleet in the Black Sea had been driven into mine-bound harbors. The Armenian provinces, which were to furnish great riches in oil to the Central Powers, were in revolt against the peace treaty and, with the assistance of the Russian army of the Caucasus, had defeated the Turks and driven them out of Erzerum. The entire Near East was in an uproar that boded ill for the German cause. Fear of what might happen in Russia, if the war lasted another year, spurred Germany on to continue her attacks, no matter at what cost. We were to expect a continuance of battle as long as Germany had the men to use. It made no difference what the cost was. Germany was outnumbered on the Western Front, the margin small, but still against her. Given sufficient time, therefore, there seemed no doubt of the ability of the Allies to summon to a given point an equal number of men.

Aircraft in defense had been considerably developed in this battle, and all thought that in the year 1918 it would play a great part in Allied operations. From March 20-21 down to April 3-4, the British brought down 240 German airplanes and drove 123 out of control. Excluding bombs dropt in raids on Germany, British aircraft dropt during the same period 179 tons of bombs by day and 151 tons by night, a total of over 300 tons. They also in the same period had fired 139,525 rounds of ammunition from machine-guns upon ground-targets. The maximum number of rounds fired at ground-targets in a single day was 250,000, and in a single night 63,000. The maximum weight of bombs dropt during a single day was 31 tons, and in a single night 27 tons. Long-distance bombing raids made in March comprised thirteen British ones on German towns and only one German raid upon London.

The second phase of the battle died down by April 7, after lasting less than three days. The fighting had resolved itself into more or less isolated engagements, in which the French and British more than held their own. The attention of the Germans was now mainly directed at the lower end of the battlefield, with attempts to enlarge its area in order to get elbow-room in which to move masses of

troops. Meanwhile Foch was biding his time, meeting German assaults with powerful resistance, and here and there conforming his lines to the necessities of battle. It was confidentially stated in Paris that Foch would never be drawn into a false move, that he would strike with his reserves only at some such moment as might be chosen by him as the most advantageous. The Germans were still far from accomplishing their major purposes, which was the separation of the British and French. They had won a great battle and administered to one strong British army a heavy defeat, and they were approaching Amiens at a slow pace, but they had paid for it with 300,000 casualties and there was not the smallest promise that they could achieve a new Sedan or Waterloo. Indeed, there was a growing likelihood for them of a second Verdun.

Captain von Schwink, who was a German staff officer charged with intelligence signaling and flying duties in the 17th German army during 1918, in describing the main idea of the great German offensive of 1918, said [12] in January, 1919, that the plan was to break through to the sea, cutting the British army into two parts, one of which was to be driven back on the Channel ports while the other was to be thrown southward in disorder upon the French. All that happened afterward was in the nature of attempts to repair this plan, which had gone awry, or to substitute some other which had not been originally contemplated. The original plan, according to Schwink, went awry from the first day. Even while the Kaiser was sending ecstatic telegrams to Berlin, and while the British public was reading anxiously of that hurried retreat upon Amiens, the German staff knew they had failed. The main weight of the attack was to have fallen north of the Somme. The Germans had no intention of massing divisions south of a line drawn from St. Quentin to Amiens. The attack did not succeed as had been expected, except south of St. Quentin, and the swift advance there was judged to be of merely minor importance. The Germans had hoped to gain an equal success all along the line. What shattered their hopes was the stubborn resistance of the British Third Army. Schwink said they "were

[12] In a statement made at Cologne and cabled to The *Times* (New York).

much impress'' by the fighting qualities of divisions in that army. He singled out for honorable mention the Twenty-fifth Division, that held up the strength of five German divisions. The scheme was broken in two days. On March 28 an attack between Oppy and Neuville-St.Vaast was launched in order to extend the southern success. The German staff were confident that they would recover Vimy Ridge and capture Arras by the weight of the first blow, but they failed here completely.

The reasons were that the artillery preparation had not

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A GUN USED BY THE GERMANS IN BOMBARDING AMIENS

been sufficient, the men could not bring up ammunition fast enough; and the resistance of British infantry went beyond all German calculation. The resistance had been so strong, the check so discouraging, and the losses so heavy, that the German staff decided to give up altogether the original plan to break through to the sea north of Amiens, and looked for a new scene of action in which they could work with smaller forces and with some chance of success, but still the sea was the lure. They then organized the attack of April 9, south of Ypres, which had Dunkirk and Calais as its objective,

and from the opening attack intended to push through. Again, the problems of feeding guns had not been sufficiently studied and again this branch of the service compromised the retreat.

In the whole campaign of 1918, what most impresst Schwink was the discrepancy between the German staff's estimate of the fighting value of British divisions and their actual value. The German staff consistently and considerably underestimated the British divisions. To their disgust they found that divisions which had been three and four times through the mill were able still to fight steadily. To make their disappointment greater they had somehow persuaded themselves that the British depots were in general empty and such drafts as could be sent would be of no account. Last and most irritating of all these chapters of disillusion must have been the discovery that, as Schwink put it, "the fighting value of the German divisions was generally overestimated."

War correspondents sought and obtained an audience with Foch early in April. "Well, gentlemen," he said, "as you know, our affairs are not going badly. The enemy has been blocked in since the 27th of March. You can see it on that map. The wave has broken on the beach; that means, it has come up against a serious obstacle. We have stopt it. And now we are going to try to do still better. I don't know if I can say any more to you." Foch paused for a moment, a heavy shower beating against the windows of his headquarters. "It is wretched weather," he said, "but we must take it as it comes. I wish you better weather and good news. It is a time when we all have to work hard. You will work with your pens, and we with our arms." [13]

[13] Principal Sources: The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, The *Journal of Commerce* (New York), Frederick Palmer's "America in France," Associated Press dispatches, The *Sun*, The *Times*, The *Tribune*, New York.

## III

## THE BATTLE OF ARMENTIÈRES—AMERICANS THERE AND AT SEICHEPREY—THE THIRD LIBERTY LOAN

### April 9, 1918—April 20, 1918

AFTER compelling the Allies to concentrate on the Somme and Oise for the defense of Amiens and Paris, Ludendorff decided to strike a blow against the British between La Bassée Canal and the coast, as a separate operation, with less ambitious, but not less deadly, aims than the larger scheme which had depended on the capture of Amiens. This new battle had for its object to break through at the center the British Army covering the Channel ports, to roll up its two wings, throwing the right back of the Somme, and forcing the left, either to stand with its back to the sea, or fight its way as best it could down to the Somme.

On April 9 General von Quast attacked British and Portuguese positions along the whole front from Givenchy to Armentières. A concentrated bombardment gradually increased until, on the second day, having reached intensity, it was followed by great quantities of poison-gas. During one night over 60,000 gas-shells were thrown. The gunfire reached behind the lines to towns and villages as far away as Béthune, Armentières, Vermelles, and Philosophe. The Germans at some points were able at once to penetrate advanced lines, as in the neighborhood of Neuve Chapelle, Frauguissart and the Cardonnerie farm. The purpose was the same as that which had proved temporarily successful in the opening battle—to break through British defenses and sweep on to heights beyond. Had the Germans succeeded in that, the hinge at Arras would have been destroyed through the forced evacuation of Vimy Ridge.

The Germans had found themselves cramped in a rela-

tively narrow salient along the Avre with no room to spread out, so that their numbers could not be used advantageously, and to have increased the number of men per mile would have caused heavy slaughter. As the number of men increased, the burden of the transport also increased, causing a complete blockade of all available routes to the front. Thus the Germans, having to attack in a very narrow area, could not conceal their object. Could they have had an active front of a hundred miles, or even half that distance, they would have been able to divert attention from the real front which they intended to attack. With their active front widened so as to include the line from Montdidier to Armentières, or even to Arras, Germany could have attacked where she pleased, could have created local salients, and if the supply of men held out, could have gradually encircled each place by attacks north and south of it. The base for the assault was Lille. From that great industrial city railroads radiated in every direction, affording a system for concentrating troops and transporting them to the front much superior to the facilities of the British. Therein lay a danger to Haig's forces on that part of the line. The movement was disquieting, unless the recent failure of the Germans in the south—that is to say, from La Fère to Arras—to attain Amiens, or open the road to Paris, was weighed in the balance. The attack in the north signified that they knew they were behind in their schedule, and that final success was now in doubt.

The Germans had no serious difficulty in forcing the irregular British line back at several points between La Bassée Canal and Armentières. Two towns north and south of the old fighting-ground at Neuve Chapelle—Richebourg-St. Vaast and Laventie—were taken, and at Fauquissart and Cardonnerie Farm the British had to give ground. At crossings on the Lawe and Lys rivers the fighting was especially heavy. South of Armentières the Lys was crossed in several places. But every foot of that region was familiar to the defenders. In the fall of 1914 it had been a center of action in the "race for the sea," which the Germans lost, altho having a greatly superior force. At that time the British were often reduced to desperate straits for want of

reinforcements, divisions dwindling to skeletons of brigades, regiments to little more than corporal's guards, while whole battalions virtually disappeared. Nevertheless, remnants held on and saved the day.

In this battle there was a disparity of numbers in favor of the Germans, but it was probably not so great as in 1914, when at times there were eight Germans to each British soldier in the field, and often four or five. The British now had abundant ammunition and had superiority in the air.

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ENTENTE SOLDIERS RETALIATING WITH POISON GAS

The weight of the initial attacks, the intensity of the bombardment and the determination with which the Germans tried to develop their first successes, suggested that they attached as much importance to this new venture in southern Flanders as they had to their first advance westward across the Somme. The fighting continued almost without interruption for thirty hours. There was a sanguinary struggle on the slopes of Messines Ridge, where some of the Germans reached the village of that name, but only to be flung out. German shock troops were sent dribbling through the broken

trenches in the region of Ploegsteert and around the north side of Armentières toward the Bailleul road. Eight divisions formed the narrow head of a thrust behind a barrage of unprecedented density. The aim of the attack at the beginning was to break the front held by the Portuguese on both sides of Neuve Chapelle, then to drive on to the Lys at Bac-St. Maur and down to Givenchy and toward Béthune. La Bassée and the Givenchy ruins were pounded until it semed as if they would be flattened like the fields behind them. After each pounding another block of men in gray would appear, but the British stolidly cut them into ragged strips, sending forward fresh supplies of bombs. Prisoners numbering something like a thousand were taken. Some of the prisoners said this was only the second great blow of an offensive which was expected to finish the war, and that other blows would follow with the intention of destroying the British; in fact, the summer's fighting was to have that aim.

American troops, including the Twenty-seventh Division, were now reinforcing the British along the front on which the Germans were making attacks. The Americans had 300,000 men in various parts of France. Of these 100,000 had started for the British front while others were relieving French troops in four sectors. Presumably we were putting around 200,000 men at the service of the Allies. This was a small number as this war went, but it was equal to a class of French recruits and it was half as large as the annual increase in the German army. As the men were picked soldiers, they were better as human material than either a French or German class. Besides the Twenty-seventh Division, the Thirtieth American Division came to this front. The Americans do not seem to have gone into action, however, for some weeks, when they assisted in dislodging the Germans from Kemmel Hill.

This, the fourth week of the offensive, found Germany's opponents acutely aware of the sore trials which confronted them. There was no tendency among statesmen or thoughtful observers to minimize Germany's display of numerical power, her resourceful and determined leadership, or her actual achievements. At the same time we had only to recall

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X Major Mick Mannock crash site July 26, 19

the first few weeks before the Marne, and the weeks before Verdun, to recognize that there was not yet the same fear of a possible catastrophe; at least there was not, after the battle in Picardy. There was no forced optimism in the feeling that the fundamental cause of the Allies could not be defeated. The Entente mind refused to accept victory for an unscrupulous militarism over a world-outlook which, despite any sins and errors the Allies might have been guilty of, jointly and severally, still towered in the moral sunlight above the despoilers of Belgium, the assassins of the *Lusitania*, and the cynical aggression of Brest-Litovsk. There was difficulty in imagining the strength of three great nations—France, Britain, and America—succumbing to the power of a single opponent. Unquestionably, in the long and crowded past, peoples and empires had met their fates; they had declined and fallen, and it was not written in the stars that the glory of France or the power of the Anglo-Saxon world should endure always. But it was only the event which could disprove a deep-rooted belief that Great Britain and France would endure many generations longer.

Faith and fact blended to form an argument from the earlier crises of the war. One could deduce from the story of the Marne, of Ypres, and of Verdun, the presence of great qualities which promised that the German will could not impose itself upon the Entente Allies. It was a fact that the armies of France, beaten back in the first month of the war along the entire front, with tragic losses in dead, wounded, and prisoners, had retreated nearly two hundred miles in two weeks, and then turned and snatched victory from defeat. It was a fact that the Kaiser again in 1914 had stood waiting to march into Nancy, and that Castelnau's men, fresh from the disaster of Morhange, had shattered the Kaiser's hopes on the Grand Couronné. It was a fact that from Joffre had gone out the order to Maunoury's men on the Ourcq that they might die in their tracks, but must not yield, and that they did not yield. It was a fact that at La Fère Champenoise it was a last desperate charge by the center of an army beaten on both flanks—Foch's hastily assembled army—that saved France. It was a fact that a thin line of British at Ypres in 1914 had closed the door to

Calais in the Kaiser's face. Nor was it unreasoning optimism to hold that the British and French, with Americans to help, would do such deeds again.

Once the British could definitely hold their lines on the northern and southern side of the wedge, the Germans would be placed in a serious predicament, and it would grow more serious the further west they penetrated. If, on the other hand, the British gave way sufficiently in the north, positions on the Wytschaete Ridge and with it the Passchendaele Ridge would have to be abandoned, and in that case Ypres would almost certainly fall and the way to Calais be opened. From south of Ypres to La Bassée the offensive was carried out by the Germans with great desperation, thousands of men being under cover of unprecedented bombardments, but the Germans were nowhere able to break through; a line merely bent back again under great pressure. Particularly deep were the wedges driven in northwest of Armentières and northwest of La Bassée—salients which, combined with gas in the town, made necessary on April 10 the evacuation by the British of Armentières, positions southwest of Armentières and north having been prest back east of La Bassée. Givenchy Hill, which was the key to Bapaume, had been tenaciously held, and the town of Givenchy retaken, while to the north, in the region of Ypres, the attacks against high ground about Messines Ridge everywhere were decisively repulsed. Vimy Ridge, which was won a year before by the Canadians, had received a prodigious visitation of shells, but the Canadians with complacency now awaited an infantry attack, satisfied that they again would be able to hold this important sector hereafter to be long associated with their name.

An industrial city, with a population before the war about equal to that of Poughkeepsie, Armentières, now evacuated by the British, and hailed by the Kaiser in a telegram to the Kaiserin as a great German victory, had lost its value as a center of industry, but, like any good-sized place, it had offered useful storage room and defensible cellars and buildings. It was equal in size also to the town of Lens, which the British attacked in 1917 for months, but never quite secured. The contrast between the British failure at Lens

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CANADIAN TROOPS SALUTING KING GEORGE FROM A ROADSIDE

and the German success at Armentières accentuated this British reverse. The German bombardment south of Armentières had begun on April 9, when infantry attacked from a point just below the city, down to Givenchy, a distance of fourteen miles. Here a trench front had withstood attacks for nearly three years and a half. This loss weakened the northerly half of the British front, in somewhat the same manner as the loss of Bapaume had weakened the southern half, but to a less extent. Through Armentières, as through Bapaume, ran a possible line of advance to the coast, forty miles distant. The southerly attempt had been checked before Amiens by the expedient of throwing in a reserve French army, but there were as yet no French troops at hand to replace the British in this part of the field. The loss was less serious than would have been the capture of Amiens; it at least served as a diversion, giving the French time to build up a system of defenses for Amiens.

"A battle is a living thing: it must have time to grow and develop," Hindenburg had said in reference to the German offensive. His dictum was illustrated in this shifting of the offensive to the north. To the south, above and below the Somme, the German advance had been halted, the real objective not attained, whether that objective was the limited one of ousting the Allies from Amiens, or the much greater one of breaking the French and British lines at their junction point and rolling the British armies back toward the Channel coast. The offensive against Amiens, had it succeeded in reaching the sea, would have separated the British and French, but an offensive in the north, provided it reached the sea, would not have broken connection between the French and British; it would simply have pushed the latter further west and south toward the Somme and Seine. The greater coup having failed, the lesser was attempted, but on a smaller scale, which was inevitable because the German reserves had been reduced, and their pounding process could not be kept up indefinitely. Moreover, the initial gains had been less and territory conquered was not a real measure of success. An attack launched after sufficient preparation and with sufficient masses of men could always make headway, the defender being at an immediate disadvantage, since

he could not hold his ground against artillery drum-fire, gas and huge masses of infantry. The gains in the Armentières region were not surprizing. They were regarded as merely normal, the Germans having the advantage of the initiative. Germany was now recognized as a wild beast at bay, and in trying to crush the Allies had declared herself willing to bleed herself white. There was no other way out for her military autocracy, and the Western democracy had to accept her ferocious challenge. But with each "blood bath" in Flanders, Artois and Picardy, German militarism was drawing nearer its end.

The British stood firm at vital points. Wytschaete was held and so were Messines Ridge, Lestrem, Ploegsteert, Ploegsteert Wood and Hollebeke, against which furious assaults were launched only to break down or be nullified by counter-attacks. Armentières had marked the farthest retirement in this region of the French, British, and Belgians in August and September, 1914. Just to the north, near Ypres, the Germans on April 22, 1915, had first used their poisonous gas on Canadian troops, and here on December 19, in the same year, they had driven hard at the thin line of Canadians in a desperate effort to reach Calais. On both occasions the Canadians beat them back and held their lines intact. It was from near this ground that the British launched their counter-offensive in February, 1916, and withstood furious attacks during April and May of the same year.

While this battle of Armentières was going on, there was a lull in the struggle before Amiens. American troops had made their appearance in the sectors occupied by the British, altho there was nothing to show that they had actually entered into the fighting. In the Toul sector, however, American troops had been engaged. The holding of Messines Ridge, in spite of furious attacks, was encouraging, because it was one of many commanding slopes in the path of the Germans. In this war the British when on the defensive had before been able to tire out the offensive; having a reputation for not knowing when they were worsted, they had often snatched victory from imminent defeat. Behind them the patient and alert Foch was watching for the moment when

the Germans should overreach themselves, or falter from exhaustion.

The important points in this region were the Messines-Wytschaete Ridge and the Passchendaele Ridge north of it, taken by the British in the previous autumn. As long as these held out, the British were safe. The progress of the Germans had now been held up for ten days on the heights of Vimy and Notre-Dame-de-Lorette. They had pushed in the British center, but both flanks held. What little ground was lost on the southern flank at Givenchy had been immediately regained by an attack which netted, in addition to the ground, about a thousand prisoners. It was in the north that the Messines Ridge acted as the stumbling-block. The Germans in their westward advance had both their flanks in extreme danger from bastions overlooking their entire field of maneuvers from which artillery could pour fire into their rear as well as against their front and flanks. The danger to them, while the same as it was on the Somme, was here doubled, since both flanks were affected, whereas on the Somme only the northern one was involved. The fighting appeared to die down in the Armentières area soon after the British withdrew. When the Germans forded the river Lawe, British machine-guns slaughtered them in great numbers. Wave after wave came up, but they were unable to advance far.

In a raid carried out by the Germans on April 10 against Americans northwest of Toul, they sought to penetrate to third line positions with a special battalion of 800 shock troops, who had rehearsed the operation for two or three weeks behind the lines. As soon as the barrage began American batteries, without waiting for a rocket signal, laid down a counter-barrage, with the result that fewer than 200 Germans succeeded in climbing out of their trenches. When the German barrage started American outposts moved into the first line, where, with other infantrymen and machine-gunners, they waited for the Germans, poured a deadly fire into them, climbed out of their trenches and engaged with grenades and hand-to-hand fighting with the few who were able to cross No Man's Land. American infantrymen finally drove them back, and, protected by machine-gun and auto-

matic fire, dragged their dead back to the trenches for identification. No Man's Land was strewn with German dead.

After the offensive had been three weeks in progress in the north Haig, on April 12, issued a stirring command to his men that they must hold their ground at whatever cost. "There must be no retirement," he said, altho they were fighting "with their backs to the wall." He added that the French were "moving rapidly and in great force to our support." This was the first official intimation that the Allies might strike back. They stood now on a front which had been dented and battered, but was still intact. The capture of Merville by the Germans occurred during the day, but along the line from just north of Lens to Hollebeke and southeast of Ypres, tremendous attacks had been met by savage resistance. The hardest fighting centered about Messines Ridge.

On April 12, after a night of terrific artillery-fire and a bombardment with gas-shells, the Germans continued their efforts to drive through to the third line of American positions on the eastern front near Apremont Forest, and made two attacks, both of which failed. The enemy's casualties in the four days' fighting were estimated at between 300 and 400. Of this number more than 100 were killed. The Germans wasted fully one-half of their trained shock-troop battalion of 800 men, but were unable to penetrate the American lines. Next day, preceded by an intense bombardment of high explosives and poison-gas shells, picked troops from four German companies hurled themselves against the American positions on the right bank of the Meuse north of St. Mihiel, but were repulsed after terrific hand-to-hand fighting.

That the third German blow had definitely failed in its object of breaking through the British defense seemed by April 15 as certain as the failure of the first and second blows. The German plans were made on a great scale, for on the whole front, from above Armentières nearly to Lens, they were expected to break the British line by the first impact and then overrun the country from Béthune in the south to Sassel in the north. At Estaires, where there was no

time to blow up a drawbridge, the Germans poured into the village, only to be beaten out and driven across the canal. For a long time the half-destroyed bridge became a No Man's Land which neither side could cross. The savageness of the fighting about Estaires was duplicated at Merville, where a merciless struggle went on in the streets through the darkness of night. One bridge across the Bouvre was blown up while the Germans were actually on it and all went into the air. Another bridge was blown up just as the last British soldier crossed.[14]

The British were now so tired after weeks of fighting that they could hardly stagger up to resist another attack; so tired that they went on fighting like sleep-walkers and during respites lay in ditches, under hedges, and in open fields in deep slumber until the shouts of their sergeants stirred them up again. The strain became almost inconceivable. Men came out of action and dropt down on the roadside in a stupor of sleep. Many almost fought in their sleep, fearing to be ordered back for weariness.

The Germans apparently were stalled by April 14 with Hazebrouck, Bailleul, Aire, Lillers and Béthune still in possession of the British. Their blows were growing more feeble and the British resistance more stubborn. The battle slowed down practically to a dead stop, similar to the Picardy drive after the first week. Another critical period had been put behind the Allies, who were awaiting further onslaughts undismayed. Part of Arnim's Fourth Army and practically all of Quast's Sixth Army, comprising more than twenty divisions (240,000 men), had been checked. Scattered over many square miles German dead revealed the price. Dead men and horses and smashed wagons littered the approaches to Béthune, St. Venant, Merville, Bailleul and Neuve-Eglise as proof of the prowess of British artillery, machine-guns and low-flying airplanes. Bridges had been smashed almost as fast as German engineers could rebuild them, paved and macadamized roads had been so shell-spitted as to render the difficulties in bringing up guns and ammunition almost insuperable. German troops were subsisting on "iron rations," kitchen-carts having been unable to follow them for two days.

[14] Perry Robinson in a cable dispatch to The *Sun* (New York).

THE HIGH-WATER MARK OF THE NORTHERN INVASION

In this territory, where the map shows highways, hills and forests west of Ypres and Armentières, the Germans, having taken Kemmel Hill, were able to push westward far enough temporarily to control Locre and Westoutre. At Westoutre, the uttermost sphere of their influence, where they were only fifteen miles from the Channel west of Dunkirk, they destroyed a church

Germans claimed that they had captured over 100,000 British prisoners with 1,500 guns. Exaggerated figures these were, but the British must necessarily have suffered heavy losses. Hundreds of miles of light railway had been destroyed and thousands of tons of supplies and munitions. When the full cost of this battle should be paid exhaustion would surely follow. Both armies were fighting for the finish. The British always fought best in the last ditch; they never had faced greater odds, but they thrived on punishment. Great Britain had been slowly measuring her enemy. It was not so with the soldiers of France and Belgium, who had never underrated Germans. For the moment, at least, Ludendorff was balked, but the Allies were not yet "out of the woods." It would take several days to tell whether the battle of Armentières was another Verdun or another Marne. Britain, however, was breathing easier after a week of the gravest anxiety. Haig within a few days had exacted a relatively greater toll from the Germans than in any similar period during the fighting on the Somme. Ludendorff had perfected his offensive to a higher degree than any other general on the Western Front, but he had paid a bigger price than any other. The British army remained uncrusht, the French were intact, and the Germans were showing signs of weariness.[15]

Through April 13 and 14 battles of a most obstinate character took place, the Germans throwing thousands of men into the attack, notwithstanding their wastage in killed and wounded. Several times Neuve Eglise changed hands, but the British finally kept possession of it. Nowhere along an eight-mile front had the Germans met with anything but repulse, and the price they paid was enormous. Ludendorff once more had been held up. At the end of ten days he was not only not in Paris, but he had not taken Amiens, no wedge had been driven between the French and British armies, and no evidence was forthcoming that the fighting value of either had been impaired. It had become necessary to give the German people a further demonstration that the German offensive was not a spent force, and as the northern line of advance seemed to offer the greatest hopes of success,

[15] London dispatch from Arthur S. Draper to The *Tribune* (New York).

the northern phase of the great drive had been opened there on April 8.

General von Bernhardi, who gained notoriety early in the war from his book, "Germany and the Next War," in which he declared that the issue for Germany was "world-empire or downfall," had been placed in command of a spearhead, with which the Germans hoped to drive across the Lys to Hazebrouck and St. Omer and so reach Calais. It was believed that, in the strategy now employed, Ludendorff had adopted Bernhardi's suggestions of a great single thrust, instead of the deliberate, cumulative tactics of Falkenhayn at Verdun. Ludendorff followed on the Somme and on the Lys Bernhardi's principle of attacking with three armies while keeping back masses of troops to be thrown solidly against the point where any one of the three armies effected the deepest and widest breach. Bernhardi held that the immediate exploitation of the point where the greatest advance was gained was the essential thing.

In four days, along a thirty-mile front, the Germans had effected a penetration of from six to eight, or at most, ten miles. Toward accomplishing their object of dividing the British army, rolling it up and penetrating to the Channel, all they had accomplished was to push the British lines back in the center but leaving their flanks unimpaired. That situation accentuated the fact that German positions became more vulnerable as the line moved westward. The country between Wytschaete at the northern angle of the German position and La Bassée at the extreme southern point, and so back to Hazebrouck, still considerably west of the furthest German advance, was in the nature of a shallow basin, surrounded by high ground. Into this basin the Germans penetrated to a maximum depth of about ten miles on a front of about fifteen between Ploegsteert Wood and La Bassée, but they had failed to force the British from the hills stretching west from Wytschaete. This was to say, that the British were still in secure possession of Messines Ridge, while in the south they were able to hold the Germans on the line of Festubert-Givenchy-Hulluch, and to keep them from Béthune, the immediate German objective in that region. Still further south the British position was flanked

by Vimy Ridge and Notre-Dame-de-Lorette. While the British continued to command the hills, and the Germans were held to the level country, there was little danger of the flanking positions being turned.

The number of German divisions employed here was identified as something in excess of twenty-five (350,000 men), of whom twenty-three (322,000 men) were still in line. Each day since the beginning of the battle had produced new divisions. Every evidence went to show the German losses had been heavy. The fighting about Neuve-Eglise was most heroic against great odds, the British troops engaged having had many continuous days of hard fighting. There was a time when men fought in a hollow square with the Germans literally all around them, and they not only held their formation until other troops came up and drove the Germans forward, but when that was done some of them broke into a counter-attack and killed great numbers. Each stage of the retirement was made in an orderly fashion, with posts left out to cover withdrawals. Hazebrouck was still safe, the Forest of Nieppe had not been crossed and the protracted defense of Givenchy still continued. All this time Foch's French reserves had not been employed.

Seven days after the launching of the assault its momentum was broken and the Teutonic forces were recoiling. Bitterly fought engagements had occurred at four places south of Ypres, while against Merville, near the apex of the triangular dent in the British line, seven assaults had been hurled back. Neuve-Eglise, on the extreme southwestern part of Messines Ridge, had been taken by the Germans, after one of the greatest struggles of the week, but the Germans occupied a shambles when they took it. The shell-torn village as it changed hands several times, on each occasion was the scene of a struggle with bayonets as troops swirled in a mad *mêlée* through crimsoned streets. British and Germans alike had but one thought as the heat of conflict got into their blood—to fight to a finish and accept the fate which was in store for them.

A German attack against American positions on the right bank of the Meuse, north of St. Mihiel, on April 14 was

made by a force of 400 picked troops recently brought there from the Russian front. Altho the Americans were outnumbered more than two to one, they repulsed the Germans, driving them back to trenches. The known enemy casualties included sixty-four dead, many wounded, and eleven prisoners, besides a number of wounded who were dragged back to the German lines by their comrades. The American casualties were comparatively light.

Germany's great effort in the north won new successes

U. S. OFFICIAL PHOTO.

GUN CAPTURED BY CANADIANS
It has a 15-in. bore and is 46 feet long

on April 16 when the important towns of Bailleul, Wulverghem, and Wytschaete passed into their hands, and her soldiers carried a large part of Messines Ridge. There had been no more bitter struggle than that waged through Bailleul, Neuve-Eglise, Wulverghem, and Wytschaete. Bailleul had held out until fresh masses of German troops were hurled into the fray. The same story was told of Wulverghem and Wytschaete. The battle for Messines Ridge was of frightful intensity. The Germans devoted their main attention to it. Messines Ridge was the key to the Ypres

sector. Its possession would give them a commanding position for starting a new drive. Accounts of the battle described small British forces as attempting to withstand heavy legions of Teutons, brought up fresh for the assault.

There was no minimizing the gravity of the German success in capturing Messines Ridge any more than of the British abandonment of Neuve-Eglise and Bailleul. The first meant imminent peril for Ypres and opening a way for advance to the Channel ports. The second brought the important railroad center of Hazebrouck nearer to German occupation, with all the sinister possibilities which that would have involved. There was good reason, however, to believe that, at every stage of the German advance, effected at enormous cost, as all the evidence went to show it had been, there ensued a sensible gain in the relative man-power of the Allies. There was, so far, no reason to conclude that the power of resistance on the side of the defense had broken. Each German success carried with it, in the appalling waste of life, an impaired capacity for resistance when the armies now slowly retiring should decide to resume the offensive.

Out of the tremendous battle, the thunder of which was heard forty or fifty miles away, there came, by April 17, reports more encouraging to the Allied Powers. The British had not only held all the ground which they were defending the day before, but had struck back so powerfully that Meteren and part of Wytschaete were retaken. The battle, now in its ninth day, had deepened in intensity at many points. From Messines Ridge southwestward the Germans had flung themselves against the granite wall of British defense. Official and semi-official dispatches told of frightful losses inflicted by British rifle- and machine-gun fire. East and north of Ypres the British had abandoned ground gained in the first phase of their own offensive of the year before. This ground was valuable for an offensive but not for a defensive operation. Now that the decision of the war was to be had in another field, the British lost nothing of vital importance by giving up the Passchendaele-Langemarck-Poelecapelle positions, just as the Germans were not hurt in their operations at Verdun by the fact that they lost Forts Vaux and Douaumont. Had the British retired from Ypres,

no serious consequences need have followed. They could then have straightened their line and shortened it. For three years they had had prepared positions ready against such an eventuality. These positions ran from high ground west of Kemmel Hill, somewhere in front of or just behind Poperinghe, and went thence to the flooded district of the Yser, where contact was made with the Belgians. The Allied line thus ran straight from high ground north of Arras to the sea at Nieuport.

Never since the war began had there been such a terrible and sustained artillery-fire as that which shook the earth and sky without interruption for thirty-six hours. There was a perpetual drum-fire, sometimes diminishing and sometimes intensifying, but always terrible. The Germans had left a blasted shell-hole area behind them over which they had to bring up troops and transports. The whole country below Meteren was one German cemetery, except that the dead were still unburied. That this failure of the main attack had cost the Germans very dearly was certain. Men told of individual battalions reduced to less than 50 per cent. of their strength. One regiment, the Second Grenadiers, lost five battalion commanders in three days. Single companies were reduced from 120 to 30 men. Every gun in one German battery was destroyed, and the entire personnel killed or taken prisoner. It was a complete obliteration of a battery.[16]

It was difficult in the British war zone to adjust oneself to existing conditions. All seemed like a horrid dream—this spreading of the German blight across the cultivated plains of Flanders, and their ancient villages. It had all occurred a little more than a week after one had been free to motor quietly along highways leading through Merville, Bailleul and a score of other nearby places, when the battle-lines were far to the eastward, and death and destruction seemed remote. Little lads then stood at attention by the roadside and saluted motors as they passed. Men and women beamed a welcome from the doors of cottages. All this was now changed. The plague of war had descended on the countryside. One met his civilian friends, little folk and aged, from

[16] Dispatch from Perry Robinson to The *Sun* (New York).

many hamlets making their way along the broad highway leading westward from the tide of invasion which was driving them from all they held dear. By day was seen a bank of grim, gray smoke from burning hamlets with a myriad of belching guns marking a zone along which British soldiers were struggling to block further inroads. By night the skyline was sometimes a lurid blaze of flames leaping up from a hundred homes and great cannon vomited volcanic fire.

It was a living hell. A part of heretofore untouched Flanders was going the way of the devastated regions of the Somme, while gentle peasant-folk stood and looked or wandered on. Some little family groups might be seen crouching beneath huge British howitzers held in reserve, their eyes fastened on the mounting columns of smoke which rose from the village whence they came. There were no tears, no words; each face was like that of one condemned to die. Others were following the lead of military guides like sheep fleeing from a storm. A few cherished belongings were carried with them as their last remaining possessions. Hundreds of Flemish homes had been shorn of their protectors, who had been called to the French colors. Some peasants clung to their cottages amid crashing of shells until British soldiers led them away. Others died by their own hearths before they could be removed. There were many cases of homes in which bedridden invalids could not be removed without help from soldiers.

From some high point one could have witnessed the battle as an arc of fire, like a loop flung from Wytschaete to Bailleul and in a sharp curve around to Merris and the country about Merville. The great gun-fire, the whole sweep of battle was closed about on three sides. After a wet, misty day which filled all this battlefield with a whitish fog, one could have seen the little city of Bailleul blazing under a cloud. As the sky darkened and the wind blew mists away, enormous flames were seen burning in Bailleul, in the glare dark masses of walls and broken roofs outlined jaggedly by fire. To the left the village of Locre was aflame under a storm of high explosives. There were burning farms and hamlets as far south as Merville, and lesser fires of single cottages and haystacks. The wind drifted smoke

across the sky in long white ribbons. Drum-fire broke out and the earth trembled with it. It was like the beating of all the drums of the world in muffled tattoo, above which and through which were enormous clangoring hammer-strokes. For miles all this panorama of battle was boiling and seething with bursting shells and curling wreaths of smoke from batteries in action. When darkness came each battery was revealed by its flashes, all the fields around filled with red wingings and sharp stabs of flame. Single guns spoke with overpowering, voices shaking the ground with

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AMERICAN SOLDIERS PROTECTED AGAINST GERMAN POISON GAS

an earthquake tremor. There was no real darkness of night. Every second the sky was crossed by rushes of light, burning beacons, and gun-flashes etching outlines of trees and cottages. Almost till darkness came, airmen were flying low, searching through the mists for movements of troops, in order to call guns to shell and scatter them.[17]

The British army had been going through a severe strain, and that strain was reflected at home. The situation had had critical moments and still was decidedly an anxious one.

[17] Dispatch from Philip Gibbs in The *Times* (New York).

The British army was playing the rôle which it often had played before. It was fighting a Waterloo. Multiply the battle of Waterloo a hundredfold and the situation at noon in that battle corresponded to the situation now in the great world-battle. The enormous task which the British army had performed and still was performing was shown by a few figures. In this battle the Germans thus far engaged twenty-eight divisions (360,000 men) and since March 21 had engaged 126 divisions (about 1,500,000 men). Of these the British army alone had engaged seventy-nine, the French alone twenty-four and the remaining twenty-three the British and French together. Of the German divisions which the British engaged, twenty-eight had been fought twice and one thrice. Of the German divisions which the French engaged four had fought twice. Of the German divisions which the French and British had engaged together fifteen had been fought twice and one thrice. Altho the French army was larger than the British, the British had taken the greater strain of battles. There was no reason to be in a state of despair when the situation was regarded from a broad point of view. British sacrifices were a necessary part of the great drama.[18]

April 18 marked the beginning of the fifth week of the German offensive, which had developed into the most stupendous military operation of all history. There had been days of deep depression and discouragement for the Allies since the morning of March 21, when the German attack began "right on the minute," as Ludendorff, who planned it all, had boasted. It was more than a battle. It was a death-grapple. In diverting their attack to Flanders the Germans had succeeded in pressing the British army hard, but as Lloyd George said in the House of Commons, "We have lost territory, but we have lost nothing vital." Whenever the British had been forced to retire they had fallen back with their faces to the foe. Time was still on the side of the Allies. Not only had the Allies held their lines, but out of the conflict they had obtained a unified command the advantages of which they would soon be able to capitalize. On

[18] Statement by Gen. F. B. Maurice, the Director of British operations at the War Office, made on April 17th.

the body of a German officer killed south of Hébuterne on April 6, was found a diary which revealed the high hopes of the German army before the offensive, their enormous concentration of troops and guns, and their ambitious plans of driving a wedge between the French and British by hurling all their weight against the British front. The German tactics of breaking off attacks when they were checked, and moving at once to another section where the chances of success might be greater, were noted by the diarist. This plan was exactly what had been adopted by the German High Command since March 21. Following are extracts from the diary:

"March 18—In three armies huge masses of troops are marching forward. In the salient south of Arras attacks will be launched at three different points. The general line of advance is in a westerly direction to the ports of Boulogne, Abbéville, etc., in order to separate the British from the French. If France is left to herself she will come to terms quickly, therefore the chief blows are to be directed against the British. The preparations have been so thoughtfully planned that failure is almost an impossibility.

"We have a colossal amount of artillery at our disposal. For instance, in our own division, of which only two regiments will be in line, we have sixty-eight batteries and several hundred trench mortars of various calibers. Gas is to be used freely, an immeasurable quantity of material is at hand for bridging trenches and shell-holes, to enable transport and artillery of the attacking infantry to follow up the enemy. Large formations follow behind to deal with the booty, wounded, and prisoners. It is strange to think of all the masses of troops which are marching westward on all the various roads over a wide front to-night. Germany is on the march.

"March 20—Our artillery is four times as great as the enemy's. Up to the present the enemy appears to have noticed nothing of our movement.

"March 21—Artillery barrage at 6. A.M. The attack was a complete success and the enemy was entirely taken by surprize. Bullecourt, Croisilles, and St. Leger are in our hands.

"March 30—We have had fairly heavy casualties and have very little success to show for them, as the opposition here is too well organized for us.

"April 1—We are to take part in the next big attack which will

take place shortly, and are to cover the right flank of a group which has to force passage over the Ancre. Our group will attack from the sector of the Hebuterne sugar factory, two kilometers south of Hébuterne, toward Colincamps. Meanwhile we remain here in support. Enormous amount of traffic on the Cambrai-Bapaume road, up to which point the railway will also be running to-morrow."

Reinforced by French troops, the Allied line on April 18 was holding against further German incursions from the region of La Bassée to the north of Ypres. Everywhere the Germans had struck the line in an endeavor to press back the defenders but were repulsed with heavy losses, having been successful nowhere in gaining further ground. Attacks of an extraordinarily violent nature were thrown on the ten-mile front between Givenchy and Robecq, where an endeavor was made to cross the canal of La Bassée and bend southward the salient which outflanked Béthune. A division of troops to each mile was used by the Germans on this sector, but the British held well and inflicted heavy losses on them. The Germans rained shells of all calibers between Givenchy and Robecq, the firing by daybreak having reached the intensity of drum-fire. Large quantities of gas-shells were intermingled with high-powered missiles. The Germans attacked a point south of Kemmel, which the British had recaptured from them, but were unable to gain any advantage. Fighting began also in northern Flanders between Langemarck and Kippe on the line held by the Belgians, and at one point penetrated the Belgian front line, but later the Germans were expelled, leaving six hundred prisoners in the hands of King Albert's men. East of Amiens, along the Avre, the French made successful attacks against the Germans on several sectors, capturing the greater part of Senecat Wood and advancing their line east and west of the stream. The Germans in the Aisne region attacked the French near Corbeny and in the Champagne, but in each instance were repulsed.

The arrival of French troops on the northern front was the most important event that happened at this time, splendid men, hard and solid, who had become war-worn and weather-worn during three and a half years. As they came

marching up roads, they looked like a streaming river of blue—blue helmets and coats, blue carts and blue lorries, all blending into one tone through April mists as they wound over the countryside and through French market-towns on the edge of the Flanders battlefields. Some of them on April 17 attacked on the British flank and drove the Germans out of a village. Several actions were in progress all the way from the Flanders front as far south as Givenchy.

FRENCH INFANTRYMEN ON THE MARCH TO AN IMPERILLED FRONT

The Germans were making desperate efforts with strong forces to capture Kemmel Hill. On old Flanders battlefields of former fighting, the ground was still in a horrible state with innumerable shell-craters filled to the brim with water, liquid bogs among dead trees and the wreckage of battle. The prisoners taken appeared disconsolate, with no enthusiasm for a continuance of the offensive. They had been told by their officers that they were going to break

through to Calais, but they did not believe they would ever get there, and admitted that their losses had been ghastly.

The heaviest attack was made between Givenchy and St. Venant, southwest of Merville, on a front of about eleven miles, this blow being aimed to force a crossing of La Bassée Canal and cut a way to Béthune. Ten divisions, making 140,000 men, were thrown into the battle. The Germans also surged forward west of the Messines Ridge, in an attempt to capture Kemmel Hill and neighboring high ground. But here too they were hurled back. Six heavy attacks were made between Bailleul and Ypres in an attempt to bend the British front. Other attacks in the same region were broken up by machine-gun fire. Successive reports gave confirmation of the terrific losses sustained by assaulting infantry. Between Givenchy and Festubert the ground was strewn with dead. At many other points on the long front excessive casualties were inflicted. Artillery and machine-gun fire mowed down storm troops in countless numbers. Machine-gunners worked their weapons in many cases until the Germans were within fifty yards of them. There was no chance of missing such point-blank targets. Time and again the line wavered and fell back unable to withstand the deluge of bullets. In the neighborhood of Robecq many threw away their rifles and swam the canal to the British side in order to surrender when unable longer to bear up under the storm which was sweeping through them. British trench-mortars did great execution, throwing high explosives into dense ranks at close range.

The artillery bombardment about Givenchy and La Bassée northward along the canal set a new high-water mark for intensity. Veterans of many battles declared they had never seen anything like it. It had been the German intention to wipe Givenchy off the map. In order to accomplish this they had increased threefold their already great concentration. Guns of all calibers up to 11-inch monsters took part in the bombardment, and continued throughout the day to hurl thousands of shells into back areas. All the Germans had to show for their sacrifice of life was one bit of a forward trench at Givenchy and one little outpost at Festubert, where a small company of British fought to the last man

before they were able to get in. For five hours the storm had gone on with high explosives and gas, the devoted British standing to while the earth upheaved and the air was thick with shell splinters. French-mortar barrage from the British became one of their most awful means of slaughter, especially when the Germans tried to cross La Basseé Canal. Infantry and gun officers said more Germans were killed than on any other day since the fighting began, and yet the Germans for a long time were not checked despite their losses. When one body fell, another would come up to fill its place and press on.

This massacre was reaching heights of horror which the world had hardly seen before in its history. What these Germans hoped to gain from all this sacrifice of field-gray men swarming upon British lines wave after wave, gaining ground or not gaining ground, but always leaving a wake of dead and dying and mangled men behind them, the Entente world could not imagine, knowing as it did its own determination to defeat them in the end. The German High Command was also seeking victory, but not even the full and brutal victory which they sought could have given any increase of comfort, or any forgetfulness of agony, to German soldiers sent into that carnage.

Armentières, or the Lys River battle, had followed tactical lines similar to those in the battle fought for Amiens. After a short but intense bombardment infantry were let loose in dense masses which burst through the outpost lines of the Allies, and, regardless of losses, stormed battle-positions by sheer force of numerical weight. It was a repetition of Mackensen's phalanx tactics which proved so effective on the Dunajac in the Russian campaign of 1915 and thus gave rise to reports that Mackensen had come west. Fresh divisions, following hard on the heels of storming troops, were flung into the battle-line to prevent the attack from slackening and to anticipate the arrival of Allies' reserves. As on the Amiens front, so in the Lys River battle, after reaching its climax the attack lost its impetus and was ultimately pulled up, partly owing to the infantry having marched ahead of their guns, but chiefly because the arrival of Allies' reserves equalized numerical conditions as between opposing forces.

Similar tactics with similar, tho lesser, results were adopted by the British in 1917 when assailing the Passchendaele Ridge, the difference between the British and German offensives being one not of system but of degree. Ludendorff attacked on a wider front and with larger forces, which, according to Prussian tradition, he used with a reckless disregard for the value of human life. According to a high military authority 126 German divisions had been brought into the fighting line since March 21. Of this number the British had engaged seventy-nine, and the French twenty-four divisions, while the British and French fighting together had engaged twenty-three divisions. These figures speak for themselves. The British had been doing on a big scale what they did in a smaller way in 1815, when the whole weight of Napoleon's attack fell on the British army while Wellington was waiting for Blücher to arrive.

Not until April 20 did Americans participate in an engagement of any real magnitude and one all their own. They had served at the front with the French and the British, had resisted several raids, had had their own casualty lists and given promise of real efficiency in battle, but on April 20 twelve hundred German storm-troops, the largest number yet concentrated against them for an offensive operation, after a terrific bombardment of gas and high explosive shells, were hurled against their positions on a one-mile front northwest of Toul. The Germans succeeded in penetrating front-line trenches and in taking the village of Seicheprey, but after hand-to-hand fighting, the Americans recaptured the village and most of the ground they had lost in the early fighting. The German casualties were believed to have been the heaviest sustained by them thus far in any operation where American troops were opposed to them. The attacking troops carried rations and intrenching tools, indicating that they had expected to occupy the American positions permanently. Seicheprey lies about seven miles east of the forest of Apremont and ten miles west of St. Mihiel, near where Americans had repulsed some raiding German storm-troops a short time before. The division attacked at Seicheprey was the Twenty-sixth, or New England Division.

THE RUINS OF SEICHEPREY

Here, east of St. Mihiel, Americans had their first severe experience in fighting with the Germans, on April 20, 1918

The fight was a bitter one. Everything the Germans had in stock was brought into play. Shells of all calibers, including gas-bombs, were used. The action became something more than a raid, even a raid on an important scale, for the cardinal principle of a raid is the retirement of the assailants to their own lines, after their purpose has been achieved, but on this occasion the Germans aimed to hold such ground as they could gain. According to statements made by prisoners, the German object was "to teach the Americans a lesson," one that would discourage them from participating in more important operations. The result,

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GENERAL PERSHING AND SECRETARY BAKER REVIEWING A GUARD OF HONOR IN FRANCE

however, was that the Americans, with French aid, recovered the ground originally lost and integrally reestablished their line. In this, as in former attacks on our troops, the German strategy was to test the quality of American forces. The casualties on both sides were apparently heavy for the number of men engaged—heavier than at first reported. But the result was a happy augury.

Attacked with every agency of frightfulness, liquid fire, poison-gas, a hail of shells that darkened the air, outnumbered enormously—twelve to one, some observers said—the Americans fought with dash and resolution, and sold

every inch of ground at the price of German lives. At the close of the fight, the German corpses that littered the field exceeded in number the fallen Americans. In the German report there was a slight allusion to "the untrained Americans." Our men could accept the qualification in the sense of inexperience in battle, since it was their first engagement that approached a major scale, but when they were able to make so firm a showing as novices, what were they not going to do when they became hardened to fire and possest of cunning in actual encounter? If as tyros they killed three or four Germans to their own two, and if they ended the struggle by retaining all the ground they originally held, what would be the result of collisions in force when they were veterans? The Americans at the end of the battle were unbroken in their organization and enthusiastic and buoyant in their eagerness to fight. Whether the German purpose was to improve a tactical position or to demoralize the "untrained" Americans, the effort was a failure and a terribly costly one in proportion to the extent of the operation and the number of troops involved. For the United States the war had now really begun.

The German blow was delivered against the junction of the French and American lines by special storm-troops—the only first-class German units, according to a French authority, then stationed east of the Picardy battlefield. While Berlin claimed the capture of 183 Americans, French dispatches told of 300 German dead in American trenches and in No Man's Land. For the first time the Germans had met Americans in serious fighting, and, as the French said, "they had broken their noses." The battle at Seicheprey promised great things for our arms when our local troops began to assert themselves in numbers. The "lesson" was not taught as the enemy intended. This, the first big fight of Pershing's men, took place not more than twenty miles from the village where Joan of Arc was born. Here the German positions were on high ground commanding Allied trenches. Opposite the Germans and behind our line was a steep hill some nine hundred feet in height, on whose further, or southwestern, slope was the village of Seicheprey. Through a small rectangular grove called the Wood of Remières, the

Germans had succeeded for a moment in pushing our line back and advancing nearly a mile and a quarter up the slope, which gave them a short-lived command of the village. They launched three thousand men in three columns each on a front of a mile and three-quarters. Covered by trees and favored by the nature of the ground, they reached the crest and delivered a heavy attack on Seicheprey. Before dawn next day the Americans and French had countered

BRITISH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

GERMAN PRISONERS TAKEN BY THE BRITISH

strongly, recovered the village and forced the enemy back.

The Germans returned to the charge with forces estimated at three battalions, led by 150 storm-troops. The Americans, supported by the French from an adjoining sector, met the attack without flinching. After two hours of desperate fighting the enemy was driven down the slope into the wood, and throughout the morning there was bitter fighting among the trees. Then toward noon the Allies swept forward irresistibly and retook the wood completely. Fighting stubbornly, the Germans were pushed back beyond the wood's

eastern fringe to their own trenches, but a new advance, combined with pressure from the flank, forced them to retreat, and by evening they had reached their original starting-point, and our line was completely reestablished. One correspondent said the attacking Germans were "dope-crazed" and "like wild men, singing and yelling as they advanced." Berlin newspapers were ablaze with headlines announcing the German capture of American positions at Seicheprey, but carried no news of the successful counter-attack. The American morale was said to be very bad and depression among our soldiers was increasing daily. The Cologne *Volkszeitung* said that in one battalion alone six soldiers committed suicide rather than go to the front line.

To the strategy of Ludendorff was afterward ascribed the German breakdown, by a critic in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*.[19] Military leaders had "set themselves tasks which were utterly impossible of accomplishment with the means at hand." Earnest warnings had been raised by military leaders against undertaking the March offensive, when "the only possibility was that of a purely defensive war." Ludendorff had, however, "caused the fears of the public to be dispelled by his propaganda helpers, and somewhat after the pattern of Capelle and his colleagues at the Admiralty, had filled the people's minds with such unfounded illusions that "a terrible awakening could not be avoided." After the first thrust failed to make its goal, "the whole plan broke down." There were many at the front and at home who understood the real situation, but Ludendorff, "instead of immediately withdrawing to the old defensive lines after the miscarriage of his plan, drove troops into new battles, used up reserves of men and material, and the morale of troops." Much might have been saved in the early weeks of the offensive "if Ludendorff had made the only possible bold decision and brought the front far back."

These operations by our men contributed notably to the success of the Third Liberty Loan which was subscribed for during the four weeks ending May 4, and reached $4,500,000,000. It was the most successful loan ever floated by any nation and was remarkable not so much for the volume of

[19] He wrote after the signing of the armistice.

sales, as for their wide distribution. The number of subscribers in each Federal Reserve District was fairly indicated as follows:

| District | *Subscribers* |
|---|---|
| New York | 4,000,000 |
| Chicago | 2,498,000 |
| Cleveland | 1,561,979 |
| Philadelphia | 1,200,000 |
| Boston | 1,200,000 |
| San Francisco | 1,000,000 |
| Atlanta | 1,000,000 |
| Minneapolis | 1,000,000 |
| Kansas City | 900,000 |
| Richmond | 900,000 |
| St. Louis | 866,342 |
| Dallas | 850,000 |

This distribution indicated that one out of every six persons in the United States participated in the loan. It was estimated that 20,000,000 subscribers would have been equivalent to one subscription for each family in the country. The total of 17,000,000 purchasers exceeded the number of buyers of the second loan by 7,000,000 and was 12,500,000 more than those who bought the First.

Americans in June were fighting on German territory in Alsace, Michigan and Wisconsin, troops having taken over a sector of the line just north of the Swiss border. It had been long expected that American troops would go into Alsace—almost at the time of their first appearance at the front in Lorraine several months before. Americans had now come to assist the French in maintaining their line in that corner of oppressed Alsace which the French had redeemed early in the war and a part of which they had held ever since.[20]

[20] Principal Sources: The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, The *Evening Post*, The *Evening Sun*, The *Tribune*, The *Sun*, The *World*, New York; *The Fortnightly Review* (London), *The Literary Digest* (New York), Associated Press dispatches.

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A GERMAN ARMY HOSPITAL IN BERLIN

## IV

## THE DRIVE AT KEMMEL HILL; AMIENS UNDER FIRE, AND AIRPLANE ACHIEVEMENTS

April 19, 1918—May 25, 1918

THE news from the battle-front on April 19 was the best that had come since Ludendorff launched his great blow. For four days the situation had been steadily improving. Haig reported that his lines were intact, that the Germans had stopt their hammering tactics, and that the British held the hills covering the northward advance to the coast. Ludendorff, taking stock of the situation, found that his great thrust for the coast had caused German losses as well as gains. His losses were believed to have reached 150,000 casualties and vast supplies of munitions. He had driven the British off their hard-earned Passchendaele Ridge; had made a deep indentation west of Armentières; had captured many prisoners, a hundred or so guns and had forced the destruction of a large quantity of stores; but his effort for a break through had succeeded no better than did those of Haig in the long campaign in 1917 to gain Passchendaele Ridge. Each fell short of its real objective and was a so-called "near victory." Ludendorff's troops now far from their bases, were forced to run their communications through barren, shell-torn areas east of Ypres and west of Armentières. As time was Haig's sure ally, so was it Ludendorff's inflexible enemy. Ludendorff was beaten unless he advanced, while Haig could win if he held ground. No sane person, however, believed the Germans had yet exhausted their powerful blows, nor was any one so optimistic as to forecast a sudden turning of the tide in favor of the Allies—and yet in three months the tide definitely turned in the Marne salient.

Rain, sleet, and a bitterly cold wind were now driving across the plains of northern France. When the weather changed there was sure to be a resumption of operations on

a gigantic scale. There was no illusion in London about the lull in the hurricane. The Germans were bound to make another terrific effort—they simply had to make one to get out of the position they were in, which was at the bottom of an amphitheater of hills. It was estimated that Germany still had seventy fresh divisions (980,000 men) to throw into the offensive. In the triangle formed by Hazebrouck, Amiens, and Noyon, there were bottled up a million and a half Germans who had been thrown into battle with a week's provisions and who—some of them for a fortnight and the rest for a month—had been more or less marking time in a district which war had rendered as sterile as the surface of the moon, and very nearly as difficult to revictual. Reports that reached Paris showed that the Germans were finding it practically impossible to get sufficient supplies. Where the ground was not marshy or impracticable because of shell-holes, it was constantly under fire of British and French artillery and airplanes.

The French were confident that they now had the Germans where they wanted them. All their efforts to advance had resulted in much heavier losses than the ground gained was worth. Allied armies were content to wait until the Germans exhausted themselves down to the point where the opportunity of the French and British would come. Karl Bleistreu, a German military writer in *Neu Europa,* declared at this time that the German losses on the Western Front between August, 1914, and August, 1917, had totalled 2,604,961 in killed and prisoners, and that on the Eastern Front the total killed and prisoners were 1,484,550. Other German writers estimated the grand total of German killed and prisoners, adding those dying of illness, wounds and casualties in colonial and naval fighting as high as 5,000,000. The losses of the Germans in the present offensive were becoming known in Germany, but only by slow degrees. Advices from Holland were that hospitals, monasteries, convents, and schools in Belgium had been filled to overflowing with wounded, and that even private houses were being requisitioned for use as hospitals. Cattle-cars, in which hay was used as bedding, were used to transport maimed men from the battle-front.

YPRES FROM AN AIRSHIP
"To stand for all time as a monument to the futility of hate"

The Germans on April 24 resumed hammering at the front door of Amiens. For days there had been heavy artillery-firing along the northern sectors of the salient. German infantry began to advance on the line passing Villers-Bretonneux, southward to Hangard, a distance of eight miles. The first attacks were repulsed, but subsequent ones centered about Villers-Bretonneux, caused a British withdrawal. Villers-Bretonneux was about eleven miles directly east of Amiens on the northern end of that fighting front. While flanked on the south by low-lying ground, it was backed by rolling hills to the west and northwest. A double drive, one on the Somme, the other on the Armentières sector, had begun. By April 25 it developed into a terrific struggle, the tide of battle surging to and fro for two days, with a decision in the balance. The British, forced out of Villers-Bretonneux, launched a counter-attack and swept the Germans back almost to the lines which they held before the fighting began.

The French, on the other hand, were driven out of Hangard-en-Santerre, but were holding positions close by, while on the line southwest of Ypres the British were compelled to withdraw slightly before furious attacks along the Meteren-Bailleul-Wytschaete line. Some of Pershing's men were bearing a share in this battle. Notwithstanding the great preparations by the Germans for a continuance of their drive toward Amiens, the first day's gains were small. From Albert south to Castel, except at Hangard-en-Santerre, their assaults were hurled back by Allied forces on the higher ground to which they had retired during the last days of the German drive in Picardy. From four to six German divisions, or from 48,000 to 72,000 men, were hurled at British and French lines near Ypres. During these three weeks the Germans had hurried up heavy cannon to the Somme battle-ground and marched forward many fresh divisions.

The battle in the west was shaping itself more and more on the Verdun model. From the North Sea to the confluence of the Oise and Aisne the Germans, in the course of five weeks, has tested out virtually the entire line with the exception of the distance from Arras to La Bassée. They had

found two weak spots in Picardy and Flanders and had exploited both with great skill. It was now fairly safe to say that, as far as this line was concerned, the period of sharp breaks was past, this last offensive being like the shove and push of the later phases of Verdun. Villages were lost only after bitter struggles, and some, as in the case of Villers-Bretonneux, were won back. The Allied retirement from Bailleul and Wytschaete was a retirement of furlongs. Kemmel Hill was taking on the aspect of Le Mort Homme. A gruelling, murderous phase had set in—Verdun on a

FRENCH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

A FRENCH COMMUNICATING TRENCH

greatly magnified scale—a front four times as long and the combatant forces larger in proportion. It was plain that not only would Germany's full effort be thrown into the battle, but news was beginning to arrive that they expected help from Austrians and Bulgarians. The struggle for positions was giving place to the white-bleeding phase.

Kemmel Hill, a height which had been looked upon as the key to the southern side of the Ypres salient, and one of the most important strategic positions on the northern battle-front, was taken by the Germans on April 26. After a defense which was one of the heroic chapters of the war, the

hill was surrounded and French forces entrenched on its slopes were overcome. The loss of this hill put the Ypres position in peril. The Germans had launched terrific attacks along the whole line, seeking a point which might yield, and found one in the section of the front held jointly by British and French troops, and against it hurled fresh divisions, surrounded Kemmel Hill and isolated French troops who were holding the position. Kemmel Hill overlooking much of the low lands back of the Allied lines was 464 feet in height and six miles southwest of Ypres. A gallant regiment of poilus had been ordered to hold it at all costs. After the Germans broke through the defending lines and were encircling the hill the French clung to their position. Overwhelming forces in gaining the crest had to advance over the bodies of these defenders. No more dramatic stand had been made. The German gains were secured at frightful cost. The French sent streams of death from machine-guns down upon struggling masses of German infantry trying to reach to the top. Six hours of fighting passed before any German infantry were able to approach the top. One French regiment immortalized itself by clinging to its post.

After this event the entire Allied line in France and Flanders stood firm for some days. Nowhere were the Germans able to make a further dent in it. Hard fighting took place around Voormezeele and south of Locre and both places several times changed hands. The Germans, at several points elsewhere along the front held by the French, tried to pierce the line, but were everywhere repulsed, notably in the St. Mihiel and Lunéville sectors where American troops were stationed. Ludendorff's report of the fighting on April 25, given below, was fairly correct as far as it went. It was only when the Germans suffered defeat that their official reports ceased to be trustworthy:

"The attack by the army of General Sixt von Arnim against Mont Kemmel led to a complete success. The height itself, looking far into the Flanders plain, is in our possession. Yesterday morning, after strong artillery activity, the infantry of General Sieger and General von Eberhardt broke forward to the attack. French divisions entrusted with the defense of Mont Kemmel, and the English troops adjoining them at Wytschaete and Dranoutre, were

thrown out of their positions. The large crater of St. Eloi, and the place itself, were captured. The numerous concrete houses and fortified farms situated in the fighting area were captured. Prussian and Bavarian troops took Mont Kemmel and the village by storm. Under the protection of the artillery, which keeps up with our troops, in spite of the difficult terrain, the infantry pushed forward at many parts as far as the Kemmel brook. We captured Dranoutre and the height to the northwest of Vleugelhoek. Battle-squadrons attacked with great success the rear communication roads of the enemy, which were crowded with carts and columns. As a result of the battle over 6,500 prisoners have been reported up to the present, the majority of whom are French."

Kemmel Hill gave the Germans a useful observation post, from which they could get a clear view of roads to Ypres on one side, and to Poperinghe on another. The German victory had an immediate effect on British positions east of Ypres because it became necessary still further to contract the line of circumvallation. During the night of the 25th, British troops withdrew to the old line which they had held in the winter of 1914-15 west of the Steenbeke down to Hooge. Farther south the Second Army troops went back something like 1,000 yards west of the 1914 line. Considering the strength of Arnim's thrust against Kemmel, and the disappointment caused by the loss of the hill, it was creditable to the Allies that they had kept their line intact, and were able to oppose an impenetrable barrier to the further advance of the Germans westward.

A French officer was quoted as saying that he did not think Foch was yet ready to take the initiative because there was "no immediate necessity" for him to take it. Both the British and French armies were busy killing Germans, "and killing them at a very satisfactory rate indeed." That was still Foch's immediate purpose. "We have the German where we want him to be," said this officer, "and we have no doubt that we can keep him there a great deal longer than it will be healthy for him." Foch had said to Clemenceau nearly a month before simply the word "Wait."

Nervousness and depression in Germany were reported at this time as a consequence of German losses. Failure was revealed in an article by Captain von Salzmann in the

Berlin *Vossische Zeitung,* in which he endeavored to restore lost confidence in Berlin by emphasizing the importance of the capture of Kemmel Hill, but he made a confession. "Our losses have been enormous," he said; "the offensive in the west has arrived at a deadlock. The enemy is much stronger than the Supreme Command assumed. We are unable to continue the offensive owing to lack of horses. The region before Ypres is a great lake, and therefore impassable. The whole country between our Amiens front and Paris is mined and will be blown up." He added that people "had begun to lose their nerve." By the end of April practically seven-ninths of all the fit German divisions on the West Front had appeared in the fighting since March 21, either on the Somme or the Lys. Kemmel Hill has since been cited as analogous in this war to "the bloody angle" at Gettysburg, which has been generally accepted as the high-water mark of the Confederacy. Six weeks afterward Château-Thierry was also cited on the high-water mark of the German military power, but at Kemmel Hill the test was probably more critical and the result more significant as to the inability of Germany to win the war.

After fierce assaults by shock-troops, increased by newly refreshed numbers, the German advance on the Channel ports stood practically where it was before. Givenchy, the gate to Béthune, had been sledge-hammered with the greatest ferocity, but it stood unbroken, while costly attempts to drive a wedge between the French and British had resulted only in a closer union and in a list of German casualties long enough to sober any general less reckless of men's lives than Ludendorff. While the loss of Kemmel was serious, the strategical position of the Allies remained unchanged and was probably strengthened by the retention after brilliant fighting of the village of Locre, lying in the valley between Kemmel and Rouge and standing in the way of a further German advance. At one time in their advance the Germans apparently had gone as far as Westoutre, three miles beyond Locre; at least their guns destroyed a church at that place.

To follow intelligently the great struggle which promised to last for weeks, one had to understand that the broken

chain of hills which was barring German progress to the coast rose out of plains five miles south of Ypres and Poperinghe and the same distance south of the hills between them and Hazebrouck. This chain extended twenty miles from near the Ypres-Comines Canal on the east, to Mont Cassel on the west, with a center group 300 feet high having Mont de Cats at the western end and Mont Rouge at the eastern, while Kemmel and Cassel were isolated hills separated from the eastern and western ends of the chain

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RUINED CHURCH AT WESTOUTRE

Near this church, a few miles west of Kemmel Hill, the German drive of 1918 in Flanders was halted

by from one to six miles respectively of rolling country. The penetration of these disconnected hills to the north, the capture of Ypres, or the cutting of the line of communication with Calais at Poperinghe and taking Hazebrouck Junction, was the German purpose in this sector, which explained Ludendorff's persistence and the price he was willing to pay.

Altho Kemmel Hill gave observation over the Ypres area,

the Allies were strongly placed to the west and north and were growing stronger daily as the amalgamation of the British and French improved and American forces prepared to cooperate with them. The Allies' plan to make the Germans pay the highest price for every mile they advanced, at a minimum cost to themselves, had to be weighed in the balance with all local German successes. The German flood was spending itself on Allied bayonets and heavier onslaughts were certain to follow and perhaps further local successes. The Germans still had many reserve divisions which would last a long time, even at the rate they were being used. More and more the question of the hour became one of man-power and in the final effort victory would go to the side having the last reserves.[21]

April 29 became one of the bitterest fighting days that the Flanders battle-ground had seen since the offensive began. Since early morning had Arnim sent great numbers of troops against the Allied line between Zillebeke Lake and Bailleul, with the hills east of Kemmel Hill as his ultimate objective. At the same time a secondary thrust was made at the Belgians in the region of the Yser, north of Ypres. The German commander had nothing to show, however, for his drive but a long list of dead and wounded. Southeast of Ypres the British had made slight gains. Around Locre French and British not only held the town itself, but much valuable terrain in the hill country nearby. Many prisoners were captured in the operations. Berlin officially admitted the loss of Locre, but claimed to have captured certain English trenches in the Voormezeele region. Correspondents with the British army agreed in calling the engagement along the twelve-mile line around Ypres a disastrous defeat for the Germans. The Germans used probably thirteen divisions east of Ypres and two more northward. The violence of gunfire had never been greater or more unceasing at any period of the war.

By April 30 a pause had come, the ground everywhere covered with gray-clad bodies, the British and French holding securely all their positions. Arnim's forces had continued their efforts to break British lines and press back

[21] Caspar Whitney in a New York *Tribune* dispatch from Paris.

British and French from high ground to the southwest, but everywhere their efforts had been fruitless. Once they had captured Locre, but a counter-thrust forced them out. North of Locre the British pushed them back at several points, notably between Kemmel and La Clytie. The Germans had suffered in one day well-nigh the heaviest casualties of any on the northern front, wave after wave of attacking forces being mowed down by artillery and infantry fire. Near Amiens and around Noyon they likewise failed in all attempts to push forward. East of Villers-Bretonneux the British advanced their front. In the Noyon sector the French reestablished lines which the Germans previously had captured from them. Ludendorff's definite repulse here in the region of Ypres was pronounced Britain's greatest performance thus far in the war. The Germans had been employed there in extraordinary numbers. The British smashed them in a trial of sheer strength. They inflicted a severe and costly jolt and won a notable defensive victory. The Germans under Arnim had hurled at least 225,000 men against the hills around Ypres.

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GEN. SIR FREDERICK D. MAURICE

To whom, at the time of the Kemmel Hill crisis, was credited an inquiry, "Where is Blücher?"

On April 30 a heavy German attack, launched against Americans near Villers-Bretonneux, was repulsed with heavy losses, after a German preliminary bombardment lasting two hours. When infantry rushed forward, they were driven back leaving large numbers of dead in front of the American lines. There was hand-to-hand fighting all along the line. Here was the first occasion in which Americans, small as the force then was, had been engaged in a big battle proper. Germany could not stop and dig in, as she had done

on the Aisne in 1914, for the German people were thrilled with the lust of battle, their appetite having grown with the advances made, and with the Kaiser's claims to success. In order to hold what they had gained, they had to fight for more. The war had been so far a profitable enterprise, judged by the only standard they had—the standard of conquest—and having acquired that profit, they were ready for peace, altho a victory had not been achieved. British casualties reported in April reached a total of 52,475, divided as follows: killed or died of wounds, officers, 1,621; men, 7,723. Wounded or missing, officers, 7,447; men, 35,684. The total in March was 14,000, the smallest in several months.

A lull, broken only by minor local attacks, marked the last day of the sixth week of the battle. It was recalled how, in a war of another six weeks, Prussia in 1866 had conquered Austria and how, in five and a half weeks from the declaration of war in 1870, German armies had won at Sedan. These German schedules had to be kept in mind in judging the situation now. One of two things was evident. Either the plans of the German General Staff had been frustrated and Germany had lost the decision, or the battle for which the German people had been called upon to render the last sacrifices was not, in the minds of the General Staff, a battle at all, but a campaign that would last for months and possibly lengthen out to the dimensions of a war. While no cautious observer would yet say the German effort had spent itself, it was not too reckless to say that the battle was approaching what the French called "stabilization." It had become a question whether movement, as a phase of the war, had not reached its end, whether the German offensive, if it continued, would not now have to assume the slow process of grinding attrition. The battle had reached the same stage as that at Verdun in June, 1916. Just as the battle of Verdun then settled down to a fight for Le Mort Homme and Hill 314, so this fight had become a struggle for a long series of limited objectives. There was reason to believe that the point of greatest Allied danger had passed.

A severe strain had been put on the British army. The heavy fighting between the Somme and the Oise and north of the Somme to Arras had sorely tried British troops. They

had been engaged against a force which exceeded them 7 to 4. Many British divisions had taken part in both the northern and southern battles, while others had been engaged almost continually. Haig had felt that help was needed from England, and yet none was forthcoming. He, therefore, had pointed out to Foch the urgent need of giving British troops some relief. Haig at the time issued an order of the day in which was a paragraph that soon became famous:

"Many among us now are tired. To those I would say that victory will belong to the side which holds out the longest. The French army is moving rapidly and in great force to our support. There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be held to the last man; there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of mankind depend alike upon the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment."

This was not quite the cry of despair which Haig's words, "With our backs to the wall," printed by themselves, without their setting, were interpreted to be at the time, both in England and America. The British had only 56 divisions to oppose the Germans. Without French aid the resistance which stopt the German interruption at Kemmel, as the southern drive had been dammed in front of Amiens, would not have been possible. The result of the fighting had been to exhaust the German effort. Superiority in numbers had not availed against the stubborn bravery of Franco-British soldiers. The very energy which led the Germans to make attack after attack, each involving huge sacrifices, destroyed the "will to victory" in their troops. Altho in the north and south they could look on Hazebrouck and Amiens in front of them in both directions lay still unconquered forces which stopt their further progress.

Some idea of the extent to which the British fighting numbers had been affected may be obtained from Haig's dispatch of December 21, that "at the beginning of May no less than eight divisions had been reduced to cadres, and were temporarily written off altogether as fighting units." Two other divisions "were holding positions in the lines with reduced

cadres, which it was not yet possible to bring up to establishment." A certain amount of give and take had occurred between the French army and the British. As French troops had been brought up in no unsparing numbers to stop the German advance on Amiens, so they had been used to support the left of the British line in the neighborhood of Kemmel and to strengthen the Flanders front. Five British divisions, on the other hand, had been transferred at the end of April and early in May to join the French Sixth Army and take the place of some French divisions which had been concentrated behind Amiens. All this left only 45 British infantry divisions, and most of these were below strength, some of them considerably so, for operations on the front held by armies under Haig's command. It did not improve the situation that fully three-fourths of these 45 divisions had been engaged in opposing one or both of the recent German offensives. All were war-worn and needed rest and the infusion of new blood to bring them up to really first-rate fighting trim.

By this time Ludendorff, however, had suffered losses unprecedented in any war, and Foch, with his capacity for patience, had occupied one position after another from which, when the time came, he could strike. More than a month before the Marines made their fine stroke at Château-Thierry, the army of Arnim had been hurled back with such losses in the Mont Kemmel district that some observers afterward dated the turning of the tide from April 29. What is certain is that the Germans rested for some time after their disastrous effort in that region. In a sense the time had come when it was no longer possible to reason about the war in terms of geographical or even tactical positions. Regardless of territory gained or lost, the answer to the entire question of war was found in the relative strength of the two armies in the field and in their respective casualty lists. Germany had no more to give. If victory was not soon achieved, Germany would have to leave the field to the Allied powers.

Forces the Allies had in the field also represented their maximum—or near the maximum that could be made immediately available. Great Britain had had sufficient time to reinforce her lines to the maximum that was then possible.

The French, however, had not been engaged to the limit of their possibilities. They were holding a long stretch of line in vital sectors. While they had been under heavy attacks from the apex of the Montdidier salient to Hangard, and heavily engaged about Mont Kemmel, the numbers used were relatively small. The French Army was supposed—and probably correctly supposed—to be held in leash as a reserve force for the final blow. The success of the Allies, in the final analysis, depended on their keeping out of the fight as many divisions as possible, while forcing Germany to throw in as many as possible. In other words the final reserves were to bring the chapter of horrors to an end. That was the keynote of Foch's strategy.

The Germans still had ahead of them five months of fighting weather, and they were expected to use them for a series of blows interrupted only by short periods of reorganization and preparation. There was only one chance of avoiding tremendous onslaughts from them. There was the possibility that the German people would become so horrified by the spilling of their soldiers' blood in a frenzied desire for a decisive victory that they would rise against it, with cries against those who ordered it to go on. Already the German people were beginning to realize that, notwithstanding the jubilations of their newspapers, letters from the Emperor to his generals, from the generals to their Emperor, and all the stage management of a victorious drama, their losses since March 21 had been frightful.

During April 585 airplanes were reported downed on all battle-fronts. This was somewhat more than half the total in March, which was 1,059, the highest aggregate during the war. Of the total of 585 downed in April, the Allies claimed 470 and the Germans 115. More than half the Allied bag, or 278, fell to the guns of British pilots and infantry or anti-aircraft defenses on the Western Front. Against this number 75 British machines were reported missing. British pilots had destroyed 172 German airplanes or driven them out of control; 22 machines had fallen to gun-fire, 3 coming down in British lines, and 1 large enemy bombing machine behind those lines. On April 12, 40 German machines were destroyed, 20 driven down out of control, and 2 were shot

down by anti-aircraft guns. The only occasion upon which this total had been exceeded was on March 24, when 69 machines fell, of which 45 were destroyed, 22 driven down out of control and two shot down by gunners. The French had 138 enemy-machines to their credit on the Western Front, of which 69 were destroyed, 59 driven down damaged and 10 brought down by gun-fire.

Northern France was now as beautiful as spring could make it. Under the influence of soft rain, all the beech-woods with which that region was lavishly clothed, had shaken out their leaves, and the land everywhere was of the tenderest shades of green. In woods shattered to bits by shell-fire and again and again drenched by poisoned gas, it was extraordinary to see how every remaining twig had struggled into leafage and how the ground was carpeted with wild hyacinths and wood anemones. Migrant birds had returned to their accustomed woods, even tho there was nothing left of woods. Once more one heard, as in former springs, birds singing their hearts out, but now amid the thunder of guns.[22]

On May 6 Australian and Canadian troops struck the Germans near Morlancourt, between the Ancre and Somme, east of Amiens, and advanced their lines upward of three-quarters of a mile. This part of the line was important as it defended Arras to the southwest and included Neuville-Vitasse, Mercatel and Boisleaux-St. Mars, where there had been bitter struggles since the Germans launched their offensive. American troops on the French front not far from Montdidier had been under a storm of shells for two days, projectiles containing high explosives being mingled with those charged with poisoned gas. Official reports gave intimations that severe fighting might be resumed at any time. But heavy rains were falling and caused delay. The Allies now held high ground from which to observe German positions, which were generally in the lowlands.

The Germans shelled Amiens two or three times each day with guns of various calibers, ranging up to 12 inches, and without showing any special preference for one quarter of the city over another. As a result Amiens as a whole seemed

[22] Philip Gibbs in The *Times* (New York).

to be traveling the same road as Arras. More than a score of shells struck within a radius of fifty yards of the cathedral, so that the ends of abutting streets were littered with débris. Six shells apparently hit the cathedral itself or were exploded in immediate contact with it, but the damage was almost entirely confined to the eastern end. The beautiful west front was intact, as were the transepts with their exquisite rose-windows and the quaint carved figures on its southern side. Around the eastern end, however, the story was different. One shell landed on the pavement on the northeast side about fifteen yards from the cathedral wall, but did no special damage beyond digging a hole in the ground. A second shell struck on the same side, just at the point of juncture of one of the buttresses, scarring the wall and shattering bits of priceless old glass from chapel windows. A third struck full on the stone-base of the iron railings which surround the cathedral at the eastern end, inclosing a strip of grass about six yards wide. The shell smashed the stone-base and wrecked the railings, then shattered that end of the main building, smashing large pieces out of the carved masonry, breaking beautiful old windows and bringing down two large gargoyles. The whole of this face of the building became a sorry sight. Shells and a bomb hit the roof.[23]

German artillery, under orders from the Prussian and Bavarian Crown Princes, was doing its utmost to turn Amiens into another Reims. By May 8 parts of the town had been turned into heaps of ruins. Before the population had an opportunity to evacuate the place the bombardment had killed sixty-two men, forty-eight women and nineteen children. Being within cannon shot, Germans had hurled into the city no fewer than 5,600 shells, mostly six-inch and eight-inch. Every indication pointed to a systematic effort to destroy public buildings, including the Cathedral. No troops whatever were in the city and the railroad passing through it was not in use. Aerial torpedoes to the number of 680 were launched from airplanes. Most of the shells and torpedoes were of the incendiary type and caused enormous damage. Up to May 8, 1,200 houses had been destroyed.

[23] Cable dispatch from Perry Robinson to The *Sun* (New York).

At night German airmen circled high over the city and dropt bombs. The cathedral, which possesses the finest Gothic nave in existence, had so far escaped serious damage, but any moment might see irreparable injury done it, as projectiles continued to fall around it.

The task of getting the people away was a tremendous one, as refugees from the devastated districts had increased the population to 120,000, all of whom had to be removed from danger within a few days. All traffic was forbidden to enter the city, so that the enemy could not have grounds for declaring the bombardment one of military exigency. As one passed through the deserted streets no sound broke the stillness save the crackle of footsteps on broken glass that carpeted sidewalks—that and the dull thudding of the ceaseless cannonade. At sudden intervals, now hours apart, now in rapid succession, came the screaming of a German shell followed by the heavy boom of an explosion and the noise of falling masonry. Of human life there was nothing left. Amiens was deserted, like one of the cities of the Middle Ages smitten suddenly by the plague. There was a shattered building every hundred yards. On the boulevards innumerable spots of green marked branches torn from newly foliaged trees. What made Amiens appear so terrible was the silence and loneliness of street after street with never a moving figure or sound of a voice to break the monotony of desolation.

On May 9 one of the greatest concentrations of Teutonic troops lay inside the bulge in the line which sagged down past Arras, Amiens, and Montdidier. North of this, in the salient pointing toward Hazebrouck, was a secondary concentration, but proportionately important, mile for mile. Facing it were French, British, and a vanguard of Americans. Apparently there had been a shift in the German command. Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria now commanded the Fourth and Sixth Armies down to near Arras. While the German High Command was completing preparations for a third thrust, a sinister silence had spread along the battle line. Six weeks had passed since the combined drive of the German and Bavarian Crown Princes was checked on both sides of the Somme. Comparatively little

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AMERICANS GOING TO THE FRONT IN PICARDY

On the left stands a British officer, who has halted with his aide to review the advancing Americans

ground had been won by Arnim and Quast on the Lys in four weeks. More than 150 German divisions (1,800,000 men) had been used on these two battle-fronts and an almost complete overhauling of their entire army had been made necessary for a new start. Ludendorff was believed to be concentrating the Empire's total output of brain, muscle, and material. There was little doubt that Germany was about to embark on another phase of her last great adventure. German drafts in use in refitting divisions were about half composed of returned wounded and recruits, including boys of 18 years. Few, if any, youths of this age were in the line at the beginning of the offensive. There was every probability that the class of 1919, which was being drafted in large numbers, would, with the veterans, be driven to death—fulfilling the Kaiser's alleged boast that he would "rule the world, or see every man, boy, and horse die."

Days passed without the Germans renewing the offensive. North of Kemmel, where they had gained a footing on Hill 44, one of the bloodiest sectors on the Western Front, lost vantage points were retrieved through persistent counter-attacks on May 15 by the French, who expelled the Germans from shell-holes along slopes to which they had been tenaciously holding. Likewise in the Amiens region, the French took another bite into the German lines. German artillery, however, was used vigorously against salient positions held by British and French all along the front, especially against Haig's forces south of Albert and against the French north of Kemmel. The French, north of Montdidier and along the battle-front between Montdidier and Noyon, were put under an intensive fire. American aviators on the Toul sector were doing deeds of bravery in the air against enemy flyers. The French decorated five of them with war crosses.

Every day the number of trench raids from both sides increased. In the neighborhood of the Somme and southward from Hailles, artillery was incessantly active. The Germans in their operations were endeavoring to estimate the strength of the Allied batteries by tempting them to open fire and thus disclose their emplacements and show where the barrage first struck. A German order captured in a raid gave directions to artillery observers as follows: "The enemy's barrage

should be verified minutely, and also the amount of time elapsing before it starts after our attack. A note should be made regarding spaces where shells do not strike and estimates should be made as to how many guns participate and whether there are any big caliber pieces. Roads under fire should be marked." In this way the Germans hoped to gain information as to areas where their infantry could pass with the smallest losses when a real attack was opened.

The Germans in Flanders and Picardy were still keeping up incessantly their preparations for a resumption of their drive. For several weeks they had been bringing up guns, supplies and new forces to reconstitute the units which British, French, and American guns had cut to pieces. Big guns continued to roar on various sectors and here and there small bands of infantry were leaving trenches in raids or small attacks, with the object of capturing pieces of terrain which might be of strategic value when the big fight began. By May 19 they had concentrated 140 of their best divisions between the North Sea and the Oise. These comprised two-thirds of their entire army and in round numbers made 1,680,000 men, including 1,120,000 infantrymen, all the divisions the Germans had been able to reorganize and reform after their March offensive. They were divided into five great armies as follows:

The Fourth Army, comprising seven divisions (84,000 men), between the North Sea and Ypres, commanded by Arnim; the Sixth Army, number twenty-seven divisions (324,000 men), between Ypres and Givenchy, commanded by Quast; the Seventeenth Army between Givenchy and Bucquoy, commanded by Bülow; the Second Army, between Bucquoy and Moreuil, commanded by Marwitz, and the Eighteenth Army, between Moreuil and Noyon, commanded by Huiter. The last three armies, comprising 48 divisions (576,000 men) made a total of 82 divisions (884,000 men) on the front line betwen the sea and the Oise. Fifty-eight divisions (696,000 men) were stationed in reserve behind these for the purpose of feeding the attack, when once launched, and filling up the losses. There was every indication that the resumption of the offensive would have the same objectives as the first attack in March, which was to threaten

Amiens, cut the Amiens-Clermont railway, force the evacuation of the Ypres salient, and separate the main British and French armies, thus forcing an evacuation of northern France permitting the establishment of a new line from the mouth of the Somme to Noyon by way of Montdidier.

Late in May a French heavy gun had put out of action the last German super-cannon that had been firing on Paris. Two of these long-distance guns had already been taken to the Krupp plant for repairs. In minor actions the Allies now harrassed the Germans, while improving local positions on the Flanders and Amiens fronts. One action along the Ancre resulted in the capture of a village with about 350 men and twenty machine-guns, a few miles south of Albert, just where the Ancre turns westward before joining the Somme. The Germans had launched several attacks near Albert, but as long as the line about Albert held, the passage of the Ancre was of little value to them. As things stood, the Germans had not sufficient room between their lines and the river to maneuver or concentrate. Another action was won by the French near Locre, where positions made up the main defense of the low saddle of ground between Scherpenberg and Mont Rouge. It was on this ground that the back of the last German offensive had been broken. Step by step the French had been recovering important ground about Locre, driving the Germans little by little back along the road which ran north and south through the village. The superiority of the Allies in air-fighting had resulted in the destruction, or driving down out of control, of 1,000 German airplanes since the offensive began.

With every one waiting in expectancy for the next move, day followed day, full of golden sunshine and intense heat. Guns thundered and skies were full of airplanes. Nowhere on all the main battle-front had the Germans made substantial progress since the beginning of April. It was not from lack of trying, as frequent failures at Villers-Bretonneux, about Albert, in Aveluy Wood and in the Bouzincourt areas sufficiently testified. Some gains had been made in April with the capture of Kemmel, however, but even there the French were now beating them back and gaining more elbow room.

Not only were German observation and scouting planes brought down literally by dozens every day, but confusion and destruction were being wrought day and night by bombarding squadrons upon every hostile depot, junction, or point of concentration of men and material. The testimony of prisoners was unanimous that the German anti-aircraft artillery was inadequate in number, batteries, and skill of gunners. More important than material damage was the effect of these never-ceasing air-attacks on the morale of German troops. Scarcely one of the letters found on prisoners was without an allusion to the "horrors" of Allied bomb-raids. Phrases like "no sleep again to-night," "three officers and sixty men killed or wounded by air-bombs," "forced to go without food to-day," "convoy destroyed by bomb-planes," "company bombed from cantonments last night," "the men are becoming demoralized," "will they never leave us in peace?" occurred constantly.

The most notable feature of the situation late in May was the remarkable work of airmen in various sectors where a German attack was looked for. Activity was not restricted to the actual battle area. Far back of each front there were daring raids. Rhine cities were frequently bombed. American aviators took a prominent part in this fighting. In the Lunéville and Toul sectors they gave an excellent account of themselves, while further north, and even in defense of London, they demonstrated their fighting capacity. German plans for a resumption of the offensive were seriously hampered by these sudden blows here and there. Americans in places gave them no rest. At the same time artillery battered German lines night and day, and infantrymen raided outpost positions. Pershing's men won several hot fights. A night gas-attack was loosed on the Germans near Toul, three waves of shell drenching a wooden position with poisonous fumes. It was reasonable to suppose that in two months of critical fighting the Germans had at one time or another sent up every one of their air-machines, and that the airplane casualties were equal to the casualties on the ground, or, say, 20 per cent. of the forces engaged. If the Germans had lost one plane out of every five engaged, their total aeroplane resources would not have exceeded 5,000 machines. The

actual number was probably a good deal smaller. In only the artillery and aerial forces were they showing great activity.

Kemmel was again put under a heavy bombardment, while further south guns continued to rumble. The air-fighting seemed to grow in intensity. From every sector along the front aerial squadrons were engaged in combats in which losses were inflicted. American airmen had now made their appearance on the Lys battlefield. A determined effort was made by a German aerial squadron to reach Paris, but most machines were driven off and afterward dropt their bombs in the suburbs. One or two machines penetrated the defenses, but the damage done was negligible. An attack on a large Allied hospital was made, many bombs being dropt on buildings and tents. An American air-squadron cooperated in the defense of Paris. Of thirty German airplanes which participated in a raid only one reached the city, so effective was the defense which opposed them. That one dropt several bombs, killing one person and injuring twelve. Other bombs were dropt in the suburbs where there were few victims.

Captain Baron von Richthofen, killed on the Somme battlefield on April 21, was probably the finest airman the world had ever seen. He was not only a good fighter, but the best sportsman on the German side. He had the reputation of never killing an enemy after he had him "cold." After driving an opponent down, he often landed beside him, helped him from his machine, and saw that he was comfortably treated. Richthofen was buried by the British with full military honors, the funeral a most impressive spectacle, in a cemetery not far from the spot where he was brought down. Members of the air service attended. Richthofen was credited with eighty aerial victories, compared with forty for Boelke, the next famous German flier, who was shot down in October, 1916. Immelmann, the third renowned German airman, was also dead. The most famous French flyer, Guynemer, had destroyed fifty-machines before he was killed in September, 1917. He was generally considered the most brilliant airman in the war. In a single day Guynemer shot down four machines, two of them in a single engagement and within

one minute of each other. Richthofen first attracted attention as leader of his "Flying Circus," a squadron of gaudily painted German machines which flew in a circle when fighting, so that, when one was engaged, the next flyer could sweep an antagonist from the rear. Of the forty-one German aviators who had brought down fifteen or more opponents since the beginning of the war, nineteen had fallen in action and two had been reported missing.

Major Raoul Lufbery, who was regarded as the best aviator in the American Air Service, was shot down in flames and killed on May 19 by a big German triplane he was attacking. Lufbery jumped from his flaming machine when 800 yards above the ground. He had seventeen victories to his credit. His only wound, aside from those received when he crashed to earth, was a bullet hole through the thumb. Apparently the same bullet punctured one of the gasoline tanks of his machine. Lufbery's body fell in a little flower garden, while his airplane, still burning, dropt to the ground 400 yards away. By the time the first Americans reached the spot his body had been taken by the French to a little city hall building, where it was covered with the French tricolor and a mass of roses and wild flowers. Lufbery was the first American ace to be killed as the result of an aerial fight. He was buried with full military honors by French and American detachments.

Dead at 34, Raoul Lufbery was a true adventurer and soldier of fortune, one of those bright and restless spirits who from life's commonplaces at times flash out into fame. For twenty years he had roamed the world seeking big thrills. He wandered in Algeria, Egypt, Indo-China, and Japan. For eighteen months he fought as a United States soldier in the Philippines. He worked in a restaurant in Constantinople; traveled in Roumania; had been a brewery workman in Germany; climbed Swiss mountains, and finally, after winning the praise and the thanks of the Republic of France for his coolness and courage as a member of the famous Lafayette Escadrille, was transferred to the service of his own flag and became a major. Except perhaps for Major William Thaw, he was the best known of American air-fighters. Fortune, however, had permitted him to excel Major Thaw

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RED CROSS HOSPITAL BOMBED BY THE GERMANS

As the picture shows, the hospital was plainly marked by Red Cross signs

in the number of German machines brought down and officially credited. Lufbery had seventeen victims officially credited to him. He was born in France, his father an American, his mother a French woman. The family long lived in Wallingford, Conn., where Raoul spent his early years. When he was six years old his mother died and he was placed in his grandmother's care at Bourges, France. At the age of 15 he ran away from home, seeking adventure.

German airmen in these late May days again bombed British hospitals in the area behind the lines, and killed and wounded some hundreds among the personnel and patients. Recorded in the casualty list were the names of several sisters who, with other women nurses, stood bravely by their posts throughout a terrific deluge of explosives. There was in the neighborhood one large American hospital and another in which were American workers, but neither of these appeared to have suffered, but a number of American doctors and nurses were killed and wounded when these same hospitals were afterward raided by Germans. A great number of bombs were dropt, about 30 per cent. of them huge ones which dug vast craters in the hospital grounds, and the rest high-explosive shrapnel which sent their death-dealing bullets tearing in every direction through the crowded tents and buildings. In one building which was damaged seriously, all the patients were suffering from compound fractures. Not a woman deserted her ward, but throughout the bombing each kept going her rounds and quieting the unfortunate men, who might easily have done themselves lasting harm by springing from their beds. One sister was killed outright while administering to a soldier's wants, and another was so seriously hurt that she died shortly afterward. Still another was found dying next day. Several more were among the wounded. Other workers were wounded, including several medical officers. There was nothing new or ingenious in bombing a conspicuously marked base-hospital. The Germans had done this before and would do it again. Their name had become a synonym for a species of calculated frightfulness of which the world never before had witnessed the equal.

Forty-four persons were killed and 179 wounded in a London raid on May 19, and six were injured in the provinces. Four German machines were destroyed in the raid and a fifth was brought down and fell flaming into the sea. Two others were also reported to have fallen at sea. More deaths and injuries were caused than in any other raid except that of January 28, when 58 persons were killed and 173 injured. It was the sixth raid of the year, the last one having been made on March 7. Never before had such a continued volley of firing occurred from British anti-aircraft batteries. The Gothas flew at a great height, the majority keeping well up to 12,000 feet in a clear sky. The British gunners blazed away in a concentrated fire. It was this unusually heavy barrage which evidently prevented most of the Gothas from reaching their objectives. Two or three days later British fliers twice bombed the German city of Manheim, causing in all five large fires and creating havoc, especially in the chlorin poison-gas factories. Large conflagrations were caused near Liége by Allied bombs, the railway and station damaged, and an important electric power station injured. Allied airmen also dropt bombs on Cologne, killing 178 persons and wounding 150 others.[21]

[21] Principal Sources: The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times;* The *Financial Chronicle,* The *Sun,* The *World,* New York; *The Fortnightly Review;* The *Tribune,* The *Evening Post,* The *Evening Sun,* New York; Associated Press dispatches; The *Neu Europa,* The London *Times'* "History of the War."

## V

## GERMANS CHECKED IN A DRIVE TO THE MARNE—AMERICAN SUCCESS AT CANTIGNY AND AROUND CHÂTEAU-THIERRY

May 27, 1918—June 6, 1918

A MONTH intervened between the check of the Germans at Kemmel Hill and the resumption of their offensive in a drive on May 27 from the Aisne to the Marne. Ludendorff, in organizing for a new tremendous blow, had been calling fresh divisions into line, increasing his stock of shells and guns and getting reinforcements from the Russian provinces. His resumption of the offensive was essentially a play against time, as dictated by political as well as military considerations. Having pushed two salients into the Allies' front, one astride the Somme, the other north of the Lys, he now decided to change the point of his attack and create a third by striking a blow for Paris down the Oise and Marne, an historic route followed by other armies in past years seeking the French capital. Paris, now, as in 1914, was again the ultimate object of German armies. Necessity for the new Marne drive had come from far back of the fighting lines, from the ever-increasing pressure of the German population for relief from the almost unbearable burdens imposed upon them by the war. As a sign of conditions the *Rheinische-Westfalische Zeitung*, the organ of Krupp interests, appealed to the people to "go barefoot this summer and help the Fatherland." In view of the alarming scarcity of leather, "rich and poor alike, should willingly dispense with boots and shoes." Other German newspapers advertised a new drug as "an excellent preparation to still the premature feelings of hunger and thirst." This drug was "not a substitute for the daily minimum nutrition," but it had been used with the greatest success by persons "made ill by hunger between meals." In *Simplicissimus*, a German comic paper, was printed a long list of pharmacies in which

these tablets could be bought, including nineteen places in Berlin.

Picked divisions were now concentrated at various points ready to be launched by forced night-marches against a given sector; "used up" divisions were reconstituted, artillery was placed in position, and stores of all kinds were accumulated. The weather was ideal for the enterprise and the moon at full. The offensive was resumed at first along practically the entire front. In Flanders as well as on the Aisne terrific blows were struck. At various other places there were heavy bombardments, gas-shell attacks and spirited patrol engagements. Initial successes were achieved, especially in the south where the Crown Prince's army stormed and took the Chemin-des-Dames; but in Flanders Ludendorff failed in the Locre sector, where the main assault covered the short distance between Voormezeel and Locre, south of Ypres. The larger operation occurred between Soissons and Reims, where it extended over a thirty-five mile front. It was the first time in a year that a heavy blow had been aimed in this region, where some of the bloodiest fighting of the war took place in 1917. In turning to a new sector to strike, the Germans took a course contrary to what had generally been predicted during the pause in the operations. It was evident that new dispositions of troops had been made. British and French troops had been holding this front lightly.

The first news from the attack was distinctly bad for the Allies, since it was understood that the French had had every advantage of terrain and it was not known how lightly they held this front. The line of the Chemin-des-Dames was guarded by at most only eight French and British divisions, or between 80,000 and 90,000 men, who were spread over a front of thirty miles. Such a force could never withstand a sudden rush by a mass of 400,000 to 500,000 men concentrated in front of them with incredible secrecy through forced night marches. The Germans were already established in the valley of the Ailette. Above towered the Chemin-des-Dames. Some four miles south ran the Aisne, a river of considerable width, with banks which recent heavy rains had turned into wide marsh belts. The Germans in the first rush

not only crossed the Ailette, but completely overran the Chemin-des-Dames, driving the French back toward low land on the Aisne, and by nightfall reached the Aisne. The degree of their success gave some idea of the force of the blow. In one day's fighting every advantage of terrain which the French and British had held was completely swept away, except the Aisne. It was hoped that, once behind this formidable military obstacle, the Allied troops would be able to make a stand and check the German rush, but in the fighting next day the Aisne was reached, and the Germans had plunged into French lines about four miles further and forced a salient. Following this they crossed, first at Pont-Arcy, later at other points between Berry-au-Bac and Vailly, until the position behind the Aisne was flanked, leaving nothing for the Allies to do but pull back their whole line. To have adopted any other course would have exposed them to destruction or capture. The Germans then began to move for ground south of the Aisne.

In depth of penetration the Germans had done as well on the first day of this attack as they did in March in Picardy. In less than twenty-four hours they had moved forward five or six miles. The decisive factor in a modern defensive, however, was not so much depth of penetration as width. This entire attack was on a front only one-half as wide as the front in Picardy in March. If a hole had opened up along this narrow section like the one which opened in Gough's army in March, the consequences might have been the same; namely, a forced retirement of the line on either side. On the other hand, with an orderly retirement, the British and French keeping in complete touch, the German onset might soon spend itself and the problem of bringing up Allied reserves become much simpler than it was in Picardy. The fighting ground was very close to the edge of the Soissons-Noyon-Paris triangle, within which Foch had his reserves as a safeguard against an advance on Paris from either side of the Oise.

The German military machine was again in full motion and everywhere greatly outnumbered the French and British. The deepest salient it had made was east of Vailly. Some unofficial estimates placed the number of German shock

troops at twenty-five divisions, or about 200,000 picked men. The Allied front had nowhere been pierced, but under the onslaughts had bent back in perfect liaison, all the time giving battle. The French and British were able either to carry back with them all their supplies and guns or to destroy those they were not able to take. The situation by night of the 28th seemed more reassuring. While the violence of the effort was still unabated, the Germans were making headway only on the center and even there their momentum gave signs of slackening, while the Allies were beginning to react on the wings. The French placed reserves in the line, but with the intention of sending them into action only when the enemy's major intentions were known. On the Allied side the main front was still held by a few French divisions; on the right, in the Champagne, were a small number of French and British. At no point was the Entente line pierced. It had moved back step by step, according to schedule, Foch taking the time he needed in which to place his reserves—reserves whose whereabouts was a mystery to the Germans—just where he wanted them.

Plunging southward, its momentum still unspent, the German war-machine by May 31 had driven its wedge into the Allies line until its apex reached the Marne south of Fère-en-Tardenois. Efforts to stem the tide had served only to slow it down. The Germans had extended their attack northwest along the Ailette, from which the French had fallen back, and eastward beyond Reims, which, during the first days, had formed the extreme eastern end of the line. Along the sides of the salient French and British were holding positions, but with German occupation of Château-Thierry on the Marne the beginning was seen of an expected turning movement toward Paris. East of Château-Thierry the Germans crossed the Marne and held a line south of it for some miles, as far as Veneuil.

Measured by depth of penetration at the furthest point of advance, the Germans were perhaps three or four miles deeper than they were on March 24-25 in Picardy. At Château-Thierry they were about twenty-five miles from La Fère. In Picardy they had acquired almost a perfect rectangle thirty-five miles long from north to south between Al-

belt and Lassigny, and twenty-five miles wide, the battle-front in Picardy being 100 miles long. Above the Marne the battle-front was less than seventy. The ultimate goal in March, as in May, was Paris. Had the Germans broken through in the neighborhood of Noyon in March, their armies could have poured down the valley of the Oise toward Paris. But the German rush at that time was deflected from Paris and turned straight westward toward Montdidier. At Montdidier they were fifty miles from Paris. On May 30 the apex of the advance was more than fifty miles from Paris. In both battles the worst that could have happened for the Allies did not happen.

The course of the advance in May, as events finally proved, was being more and more made amenable to the aims of Allied strategy. It was being confined within relatively narrow limits. Foch had planned to allow the central German column, pushing for the line of the Marne, to out-travel itself and thus put a strain on its communications, while he massed his reserves on the west side of the rapidly deepening and narrowing salient. As in 1914, so now the Germans made the mistake of over-reaching themselves, the inevitable consequence of over-confidence. German progress was summed up thus: First day, five miles; second day, seven miles; third day, seven miles; fourth day, three miles; fifth day, nine miles. This greatly surpassed the progress made in the Somme offensive. On the Somme, or south of the Somme, the gain on the fifth day was only three miles. But Allied strategy before Amiens compelled a fierce head-on resistance, which it did not compel in the May drive to the Marne. The Germans crossed the Aisne on a front of twenty-five miles, the Vesle on a front of between fifteen and twenty miles, and reached the Marne at first on a front of less than ten miles, which shows how dangerous was the shape the salient had assumed. The satisfactory feature of the situation was that the Allies had held fast for two days on both sides of the Marne salient—from Soissons down to the Marne and from the Marne up to Reims. Open warfare had been restored, infantry was again the "Queen of Battles." The war now became more dramatic, more complicated and fuller of surprizes than ever.

Cantigny did not figure large in a great battle raging from Ypres to Reims, but as a test of the mettle of the Americans and as proof that they were first-class fighting men and a match for the Germans, it acquired on May 29 a place in this record. The town, or the site of what was once a town, was near Montdidier, and an earlier scene of heroic resistance by French troops. Amiens was only twenty miles northwest of it. Just west of Cantigny the Germans held a salient. To flatten it out was the task set for the Americans, whom Foch had held in reserve back of the line for weeks. Their advance was made on a front of a mile and a quarter, under

FRENCH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

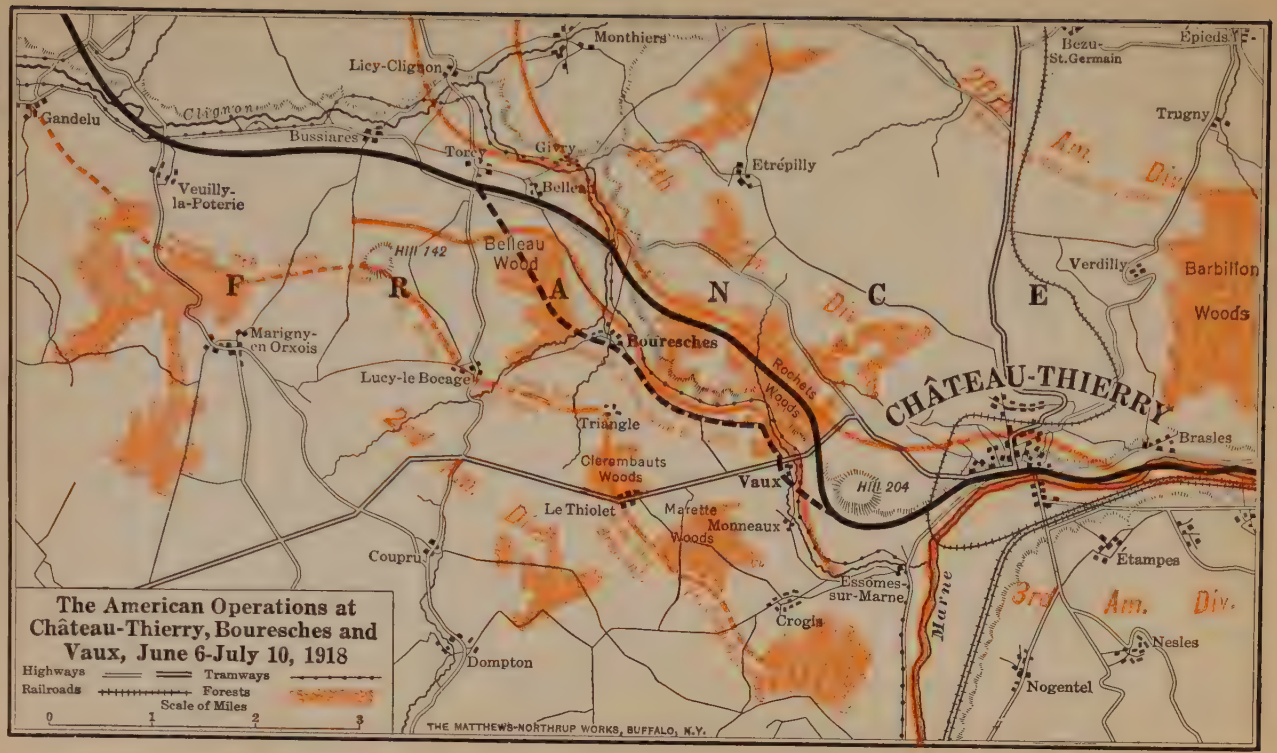
CANTIGNY AFTER THE GERMANS WERE DRIVEN OUT

the eyes of veteran French officers, who had made dispositions to reinforce the Americans if things went wrong. West of Montdidier, said the French bulletin, "Americans, supported by our tanks, brilliantly occupied a salient along a front of two kilometers and the strongly fortified village of Cantigny, capturing 170 prisoners and war material, and repulsing counter-attacks." The Americans went "over the top" at 6.43 A.M. and made the required distance of 600 yards in ten minutes under machine-gun fire. Pershing's *communiqué* gave the number of German prisoners taken as 200, and declared tnat the German casualties were heavy.

The taking of Cantigny was not a big achievement, but it was remarkable for the spirit shown by the rank and file, remarkable also as part of the record of Foch's defense before he began his memorable series of victories on July 18, which ended in the liberation of northern France and Belgium from their conquerors.

American troops did not figure in the German official report at Cantigny. "West of Montdidier," said the German War Office, "the enemy during a local advance penetrated into Cantigny." It was not in accord with the policy of the German General Staff at that time to recognize American troops as fighting in France when recognition could be avoided. Hence the Americans who went into Cantigny were merely "the enemy" engaged in a local advance. It was only when American troops were captured or driven back that they were mentioned in German official reports. The German Government was still actively demonstrating its profound conviction that it could "fool all the people all the time," so far as American participation in the war was concerned. It had become interesting to see how long the German Government could play this curious comedy and how long the German people could be deceived as to the quality of the American forces who had reached France.

When Ludendorff's offensive began in Picardy, in March, the Americans had in France four divisions which had had some experience in the trenches and all of whom, said Pershing in his report to the War Department in December, 1918, were "equal to any demands of battle-action." Such was the crisis at once developed by Ludendorff, that a proposed occupation of an American sector at the front had to be postponed, and Pershing on March 28 had "placed at the disposal of Marshal Foch, all of our forces, to be used as he might decide." At Foch's request, the First Division was transferred from the Toul sector to a position in reserve at Chaumont-en-Vexin, about fifty miles southwest of Montdidier. Some of our divisions had already been engaged in "local combats" with Germans, the most important being at Seicheprey on April 20, the Twenty-sixth or New England, Division being engaged, but "none had participated in action as a unit." American participation as a unit did not occur


Monthiers
Licy-Clignon
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Givry
Belleau
Etrépilly
Veuilly-la-Poterie
Hill 142
Belleau Wood
Bezu-St.Germain
Épieds
Trugny
Verdilly
Barbillon Woods
Marigny-en Orxois
Bouresches
Lucy-le Bocage
Rochets Woods
CHÂTEAU-THIERRY
Brasles
Triangle
Clerembauts Woods
Vaux
Hill 204
Le Thiolet
Marette Woods
Monneaux
Coupru
Essomes-sur-Marne
Crogis
Étampes
Nesles
Nogentel
Dompton
Marne
20th Div.
4th Div.
Am. Div.
3rd Am. Div.
2nd Div.
P R A N C E
The American Operations at Château-Thierry, Bouresches and Vaux, June 6-July 10, 1918
Highways
Railroads
Tramways
Forests
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

until May 28, when the First Division went into action and took Cantigny. "This brilliant action," said Pershing, "had an electrical effect." Cantigny and all other objectives had been taken "with splendid dash," and were organized and held stedfastly against vicious counter-attacks and grilling artillery-fire. While a local action, Cantigny was a "brilliant" one, and it "demonstrated our fighting qualities under extreme battle conditions." Moreover it showed that the enemy "were not altogether invincible."

This German offensive reached high-water mark on May 31, when the Allies, said Pershing, faced a crisis equally as grave as that of the Picardy offensive in March. The Third American Division, which had had preliminary training in the trenches, was now hurried to the Marne, its motorized machine-gun battalion preceding the other units. In reserve near Montdidier was the Second Division, which was sent forward by motor-trucks and other transports. It was on May 30, our Memorial Day, that the Fifth and Sixth Regiments and the Sixth Machine-Gun Battalion, United States Marines, received their orders to "move by bus to new area." Next morning long trains of camions, busses, and trucks were carrying complements of our men, 13,000 all told giving out their salutations. Through Meaux and other towns went long lines to the village of Montreuil-aux-Lions, which was less than four miles from the advancing German line. These camions were the only traffic going that day in the direction of the German army. Everything else was going the other way—refugees, old men, and women and children, riding on every conceivable conveyance, many trudging along sides of roads driving a cow or calf, all covered with white dust which the camion caravan was whirling up as it rolled along. The destination of these men was reached early on the morning of June 2, when they disembarked, stiff and tired after a journey of more than seventy-two miles. Meanwhile the Fifth Regiment was moving into line. That night men and officers of the Marines slept in the open, many of them in a field of unharvested wheat, awaiting the time when they should be summoned to battle. The Marines who fought here as part of the Second Division were now commanded by Brigadier-General

James S. Harbord. The Third Brigade comprised some regulars under Brigadier-General Lewis. Between the two pronounced rivalry was developed. Next day, June 2, began the battle of Château-Thierry, Americans holding the line against the German advance.

On June 1st infantry of the Second Division had arrived at Montmirail. The first regiment to arrive—the Ninth—after being all night on its feet, was sent to cover the Paris road near Le Thiolet, the Germans having taken Château-Thierry and a hill over which the Paris road ran, with the village of Vaux beyond. Meanwhile the Seventh Motorized Machine-Gun Battalion of the Third Division had ridden into battle; theirs had become the first American blood to be shed in the Second Marne battle. On the 4th, the Marines went in and repulsed the Germans. On the 6th, they made an attack with the French in the direction of Torcy and reached their objectives. They were then ordered to take Bouresches and Belleau Wood. For twelve days, with the Second Division in line, the Marines put all their energies against Belleau, and there won fame.

French troops for days had been fighting fiercely and almost hopelessly about Château-Thierry and were approaching the point of exhaustion when, on the 4th or 5th of June, American officers hurried up, saluted and spoke six words to the French, saying: "*Vous êtes fatigués. Vous allez partir. Notre job.*" (You are tired. You get away. Our job.") It was on May 26 that the Germans had broken through French positions on the Chemin-des-Dames and day by day they had got nearer Paris, until now only thirty-nine miles separated them from their goal. A few days more at the same rate of advance and Paris would have been within range of German guns of terrific destructive power. Then suddenly out of the gloom had flashed with new vigor this sword from across the Atlantic.

"It was the best fun we've had in our lives!" was the description given by some of the Americans of their defense of Château-Thierry. The full story of that dash to the threatened city in Ford cars and camions, their quick unloading, their immediate entry into action, and the determined fight they put up along the banks of the river, among

the streets of the city and on the bridges, made one of the minor dramatic stories of the war. These troops had begun to learn how to fire French machine-guns only a month before. They now described their exploit with all the eagerness of schoolboys telling how their team "licked the other fellows"; how they, from one side of the Marne—which is not a wide river at all as we Americans think of rivers, but a stream of about the width of the Harlem River—saw the Germans come down the other, and how they shot them with pistols from across the stream as they heard German officers

COURTESY OF THE MARINE CORPS RECRUITING PUBLICITY BUREAU.

CHATEAU-THIERRY NEAR THE RUINED BRIDGE

rallying them for another try at the crossing. They told how their machine-guns shot until they feared to burst the barrels, and how all the while Germans were falling in heaps. Three battalions of Marines, one regiment of infantry and a detachment of engineers had deployed along a line of seven kilometers awaiting another German attack, which came on the evening of the 4th. Floyd Gibbons,[25] who was wounded in the course of the fighting, described this action:

[25] Correspondent of The Chicago *Tribune*.

"The enemy attacked toward the American left, where it joined the French. They advanced through a wheat-field in platoon columns, in perfect order, flushed with many successes, confident of victory. Then the Americans showered the oncoming waves with shrapnel until the fields seemed to be sprouting thousands of white daisies. Machine-guns and rifle-fire raked the Germans. The men took careful aim before each shot. Unhurried, unflustered, they worked their weapons as tho they were before a target-range. French observers had never seen such rifle shooting. No troops could stand against such fire. The Germans wavered and then came on again. In mass formation they fought like brave men—none better—but twice they hesitated and stopt and twice resumed the advance. Then they broke and started to crawl off through standing grain. The Americans saw the wheat sway as tho stirred by a stiff breeze, and whipt those areas with their bullets. Then a French airman came swooping down from the Blue. Wildly exultant, he signaled, 'Bravo!' and darted back to give a new range to artillery men who caught a German battery moving into the position and annihilated it. It was something the Germans had not counted on. They were more than stopt. Prisoners said they never knew Americans were at the front line when they made that attack and were mystified at the manner in which the defense stiffened up."

It was on the second day that the Marines assaulted the Bois de Belleau, and the town of Bouresches, the former a dense wood, cut up with gullies and littered with boulders. At first the Americans were held up, but for 48 hours they persevered, and then advanced in a style which American soldiers had been taught for generations—a swift rush for 50 or 60 yards, then down flat on their bellies, working rifles and machine-guns, then up and on again. The Marines held the center, companies of infantry the flanks. They advanced, five yards apart, in waves, the first and third waves being automatic riflemen and hand-grenadiers, the second and fourth rifle grenadiers and riflemen. At Bouresches, behind every ruined wall, in the second stories and on the roofs of houses, behind piles of débris, were machine-guns and snipers. Hard fighting with hand-grenades and the bayonet gradually cleaned up the town.

Belleau Wood had yet to be taken, an acid test of Marine grit. It was assailed by a battalion of men with 26 officers. Only seven officers and 540 men remained when that

assault died away. Bombardment by fifty batteries had destroyed all semblance of a wood, but in tangled meshes Germans still worked machine-guns. Hand-to-hand fighting, in which officers joined, drove them out. At night airplanes flew over the field, dropping bombs on the men below, and by day artillery searched the wood with shells, while machine-guns sprayed it with bullets. The Marines stayed there five days, sending out for provisions or munitions. In the end both the wood and Bouresches were permanently held by the Americans. The success of the Americans at Château-Thierry and Belleau Wood was the preliminary step in the

COURTESY OF THE MARINE CORPS RECRUITING PUBLICITY BUREAU

GRAVES OF MARINES AT BELLEAU WOOD

great advance of the Allies under Foch, which began on July 18. The Marines had made six attacks and repulsed nine counter-attacks. The Second Division, in which they fought, was opposed at all times by two German divisions and sometimes by three. Among the Germans was the Fifth Guard Division, which was first to cross the Marne in 1914, and was beaten by the Marines.[26] The fight of May 31 at Château-Thierry itself was described by Brigadier General Catlin.[27]

[26] Willis J. Abbot's "Soldiers of the Sea" (Penn Publishing Co.).

[27] In his book "With the Help of God and a Few Marines" (Doubleday, Page & Co.)

"A hurried and despairing call for help went out—any help at all, so that it came quickly. Some kilometers to the rear was stationed an American machine-gun battalion that was ready and eager for battle, but was waiting for the fuller organization of the Third Division. But this was no time for waiting. The battalion was ordered in without support and made a speedy all-night trip to the front on motor-lorries. These boys had never faced German shell-fire before; they were stiff and cramped after their long night ride, but the smell of powder and the roar of combat were like wine to them, and they jumped into the thick of the fray like veterans. Joining a battalion of French Colonials, they entered the town and rushed to the threatened bank of the river.

"Under a galling fire they brought up their guns and organized their defense positions at the bridges with mathematical precision. Then came the Germans, a long, gray flood of them, streaming down to the bridges. The Americans opened upon them a fire so furious and accurate that the advancing columns hesitated, wavered, and then halted behind the barrier of their fallen comrades. Then they came on again. On the bridges and in the streets of Château-Thierry there raged a wild, demoniacal tempest of machine-gun fire and rifle-fire. The enemy, infuriated by this resistance, fought desperately to brush the offensive Yankees from their path. Our boys fell by the dozens beside their guns, but there was always some one to leap into the breach and keep the stream of bullets pouring into the ranks of the thwarted Huns. They held the southern bank of the Marne against the onslaught; they cleared the bridges; and at last they destroyed them, and the Germans could not pass."

The Marines had arrived at Meaux on the evening of May 31, the day when the fight at Château-Thierry began. At noon of June 1, orders came to move two battalions into line. The men had had little rest for two days and two nights, and no food but the emergency-ration of hardtack and bacon. They went into positions with no trenches or prepared defenses. The Germans were thrusting forward at the rate of six or seven miles a day, and the French were not holding. Stragglers were coming through all the time. "It was a tragedy," said General Catlin, "a heart-breaking, world-shaking tragedy, this defeat and demoralization of the heroic French troops who had fought so brilliantly for three years. The Marines lay in line that night, and as the next day advanced waited for the struggle they knew to be near. This attack, brushing away the French troops up forward and

unmasking the Americans, came late in the afternoon of a beautiful, clear day, so that Catlin saw it all like a fine panorama from his observation post:

"The Germans swept down an open slope in platoon waves, across a wide wheat-field bright with poppies that gleamed like splashes of blood in the afternoon sun. The French met the attack, and then fell steadily back. First I saw the French coming back through the wheat, fighting as they came. Then the Germans, in two columns, steady as machines. To me as a military man it was a beautiful sight. I could not but admire the precision and steadiness of those waves of gray with the sun glinting on the helmets. On they came, never wavering, never faltering, apparently irresistible.

"At the right moment the Americans opened up with a slashing barrage. Shrapnel, machine-gun, and rifle-fire was poured into those advancing lines. It was terrible in its effectiveness. The French told us that they had never seen such marksmanship practised in the heat of battle. If the German advance had looked beautiful to me, that metal curtain that our marines rang down on the scene was even more so. The German lines did not break; they were broken. The Boches fell by scores there among the wheat and poppies. They hesitated, they halted, they withdrew a space. Then they came on again; they were brave men. . . . Three times they tried to reform and break through that barrage, but they had to stop at last."

In recognition of the work of the Marines, The French changed the name of Belleau Wood to "Bois de la Brigade de Marine." By July 1 Vaux and positions along the line to Hill 204 had been taken by other forces from the Third Brigade. Vaux, situated in a valley, was slightly larger than Bouresches. The Fourth Brigade took five hundred prisoners, thus adding to the record of the Second Division. About two-thirds of Château-Thierry lay on the south bank of the Marne, the remaining third on the north bank. There was a bridge in the American sector, with houses, tall, gabled buildings, looking to be Elizabethan rather than French, built on the water's edge. Some of the French were on the north bank, giving way slowly to the German, while the Germans were continually sending forward platoons trying to cut off the French and take them on the flank. With these German groups the Americans dealt. Guns west of the town did

especially deadly work, while others slashed into Germans from the front. Day and night gunners swept the approaches to both bridges. Every time a German tried to set food on a bridge he was wiped out. Time and again Germans tried to rush the bridges, swarming through streets in the northern part of the town like a gray stream in a canyon, but each time they left piles of dead on the river-bank. Speaking in the Reichstag on June 11, the Minister of War, General von Stein, said the Americans were wasting their strength in "vain counter-attacks," they were coming "too late to be of any use to the French," the number of troops landed in France being "far below" what was expected.

In some of the earlier narratives of what the Marines accomplished at Château-Thierry justice was not done to the Regulars. The Ninth and Twenty-third Infantry, the Fifth and Sixth Marines, and the infantry units of the Third Division played equally important and difficult parts. These regiments, with other units of the Second and Third Divisions, stopt the Germans at Château-Thierry. The work of the Marine Brigade was brilliant, and nothing could have been finer than its exploit at Belleau Wood, but in the acclaim the no less effective valor of regulars, and notably that of the Ninth and Twenty-third Infantry, was overlooked. Like the Marines, they were units of the Second Division. In the last days of the fighting at Belleau Wood one brigade each from the Third and Second Divisions had a part in the battle.[28]

Of the Marines it was to be said that after the declaration of war, the first military transport to leave American shores was loaded with them. When Ludendorff in March seemed about to overwhelm France, and reach Paris, about 6,000 Marines had arrived; late in the summer, they numbered about 14,000. The troops that reached Château-Thierry at the end of May comprised one division—the Second—which had made a journey of thirty consecutive hours, during which some of the trucks broke down on the way and the men had to walk. The Marines were included in this

[28] *The Stars and Stripes.*

DESCENT TO THE MARNE
MAY - JUNE, 1918
Line at opening of Offensive:
Railroads:
Tramways:
Highways:
Canals:
Forests:
Scale of Miles
0 5 10 15
N
FRANCE
Cantigny
Montdidier
Guiscard
Assainvillers
Rubescourt
Rollot
Le Frétoy
Canny-s.-Matz
Lassigny
Le Plémont
Cuy
Suzoy
Noyon
Chauny
Forêt de St. Gobain
St. Gobain
Manicamp
Laon
Sissonne
Mortemer
Courcelles-Epayelles
Cuvilly
Méry
Belloy
Plessis-de-Roye
Belval
Thiescourt
Cannectancourt
Pontoise
Cuvilly
Resons-sur-Matz
Elincourt
Antonval
Ribécourt
Carlepont
Haute Forêt de Coucy
Landricourt
Lizy
Le Fresne
Cuny
St. Just-en-Chaussée
Marquéglise
Marest
Chevincourt
Autheuil
Ricaru
Machemont
Bailly
Tracy-le Val
Montmacq
Forêt de Laigue
Moulin-sous Touvent
Épagny
Leuilly
Neuville-sur Margival
Terny
Canal latéral à l'Aisne
Malmaison Fort
Laffaux
Chemin des Dames
Jouy
Colligis
Chermisy
Corbeny
Ailles
Braye
Hurtebise
Paissy Farm
Neufchâtel
Estrées-St. Denis
Attichy
Soissons
Vregny
Vailly
Chavonne
Berry-au-Bac
Compiègne
Glermont
Rivecourt
Ambleny
Mont de Paris
Cutry
Dommiers
Laversine
Cœuvres
Forêt de Compiègne
Montefontaine
St. Pierre-Aigle
Venizel
Braisne
Ermoise
Pont Arcy
Marne
Aisne Canal
Courcelles
Merval
Cormicy
Cauroy
Loivre
Brimont
Suippe
Vesle
Paris
Bazoches
Fismes
Magneux
Jonchery
St. Thierry
la Neuvillette
Béthény
Cernay
Champigny
Faverolles-et-Coëmy
Reims
Ft. Pompelle
Arcis-le Ponsart
Sarcy
Aubilly
Bligny
Fère-en Tardenois
Chambrecy
Boujacourt
Champlat
Montagne de Reims
Olizy-et-Violaine
Passy-Grigny
Vincelles
Treloup
Dormans
Marne
Jaulgonne
Belleau
Mont St. Père
Château Thierry
Vaux
Essomes-s.-Marne
Brasles
Passy
Épernay
Parcy-et-Tigny
Hartennes-et-Taux
Oulchy-le Château
Faverolles
Villers-Cotterets
Crépy-en Valois
Creil
Montataire
Thérain
Oise
Aisne
Ourcq
Clignon
Chézy
l'Hermitage
Rocourt
Coincy
Croucy-sur Ourcq
Veuilly-la Poterie
La Ferté Milon
Betz
Lizy-sur Ourcq
TO PARIS 35 MILES
TO MEAUX & PARIS
Forêt de Retz
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

division and had been ordered to support the French who were opposing Germans in a series of rear-guard actions. As they were new to European warfare, the Marines were not at once sent to the front, but were to wait until the French could hold out no longer, and then, as the French fell back, were to take up the fight in their place.

Otto H. Kahn, who was in Paris at the time, described the work of the Marines.[29] With little care for battle-order or strategy, they stormed past the retreating French, "yelling like wild Indians, ardent, young, irresistible in the fury of

COURTESY OF THE MARINE CORPS RECRUITING PUBLICITY BUREAU

WRECKED HOUSES AT BELLEAU

battle." Frenchmen shouted a well-meant warning: "Don't go there. The Boches have machine-guns!" The Marines yelled back: "That's where we want to go. That's where we have come 3,000 miles to go!" and then went into the jaws of the machine-guns, in defiance of all precedent, stormed with rifles and bayonets in frontal attacks, threw themselves upon the victory-flushed Germans to whom that kind of fierce onset was an utter surprize. The Marines

[29] In a United War-Work address in Boston, on November 12, 1918.

fought with reckless bravery, and paid the price in heavy losses, but for what they paid took compensation in over-full measure. Having formed themselves into a spearhead, they shattered the German onslaught until the spell of the advance was broken. On that part of the front the Germans never again made an advance. Here was seen the beginning of their great and final defeat in the Marne salient. When, six weeks later, Foch began his master-stroke, leading to their utter collapse, American troops were alloted a place of honor in the center of the line between Soissons and Reims, in an immediate defense of the approaches to Paris, and here again they made good.

Altho the number of Germans engaged against the Americans at Château-Thierry was not large, the affair had significance. The Germans had crossed the Marne by means of twenty-two light ladder bridges, telescoped like fire-escapes and wide enough for the passage of two men. Four of the bridges were destroyed by French guns. Six German machine-guns were set up on the south side of the river and a post established. Attacked at once by an infantry unit, the Germans held their ground until the Americans brought up heavy machine-gun fire and so enabled cavalry and infantry to advance, flanking the Germans and forcing their retirement. Some of the Germans escaped by swimming across the river. Except the hundred men taken prisoners, the whole battalion was destroyed. The Americans fired tens of thousands of cartridges during the operations. Approaches to the bridge were strewn with more than a thousand bodies.[30]

The general tone of news about our men at the front was still inspiring. Stript down to the bone of official fact, it still remained great news for Americans. The Yankees had been tried at Seicheprey, at Cantigny, at Château-Thierry and at Belleau Wood, and each time the result had been better. It was becoming evident that man for man American troops were better fighting men than the Germans. This seemed true beyond question in open infantry-fighting and skirmishes. Discipline and years of slavish training had been an advantage to German troops at the beginning of the war

[30] Dispatch from Gerald Campbell to The *Sun* (New York).

But now the German was tired. Men who had fought mechanically, and later hopelessly, were not individually the match for Americans, flung fresh into the battle, full of youth, strength, spirit, knowledge of right, and consciousness of victory. Two rainbows shone above this new battlefield of the Marne. One was confidence in Foch, the other was the American soldiers at the front.

At Kemmel Hill, a few weeks earlier, the Germans had given clear evidence of the waning strength of their military arm. Either Kemmel Hill, or Château-Thierry, was clearly the high-water mark of the German offensive in 1918; the

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IN RUINED BOURESCHES

point from which its reserve force steadily declined until, unable to continue the struggle longer, the Germans sought and in November signed the armistice, the terms of which amounted to unconditional surrender.

Measured by European standards, the American force thus far engaged in the war really did not bulk very large, but Europe had seen enough to know that America was in the war militarily, as well as economically and financially. The clean-cut success of Cantigny had been a happy augury, and the smart work done at Château-Thierry created an impres-

sion that the American Expeditionary Force was to be reckoned with. It was difficult to overestimate the influence exerted on civilian morale in France. German militarists had pretended to regard the American soldier with scorn, and America in general as a land of much money and "wooden swords." But high-placed Germans were beginning to worry about America. America had not yet brought her strength effectively to bear, but she had become a factor in the war and would soon become a greater one. While the eighteenth of July, the date of the beginning of Foch's great counter-offensive, was a day that American children would be taught to remember with Yorktown and Gettysburg. The eighteenth of July, in the work Americans were there to do, had been made possible by the events of May and June when Americans at Château-Thierry and Belleau Wood not only checked the Germans at a point where Paris itself might have become the stake at any moment, but put new courage into the hearts of our sorely tried Allies.

Once more, as at Verdun in 1916, and before Amiens in March, the sixth day marked the crisis of a German operation. All German major attacks had seemed to follow a course as regular as that of some diseases. There was the onset, the breaking of the front, and then the rush through the gap, newly opened until the defenders brought up reserves and the assailant lost the advantage of surprize and numbers and the front was stabilized on a new line. At the outset, the Germans tore a gap in the Allied lines from Craonne, at the eastern end of the plateau of the Chemin-des-Dames, to the high ground north and west of Soissons, which had been the scene of Pétain's brilliant local victory in the battle of Malmaison, in 1917. In Reims and about Soissons the Allied line held firmly, but between these pivots there seemed to be a complete collapse. The Germans pounded southward along two main highways to the Marne, one of which reached the river at Château-Thierry, the other at Dormans. It was along these roads that Bülow had advanced to the battle of the Marne in 1914, and over them that he retired from Montmirail and Champaubert, after the sucess of Foch at Le Fère Champenoise.

Slowly but surely the plunge of the German armies was

being halted. While the momentum had not spent itself, there had ensued a notable slackening in the advance, and the chief efforts of the Germans were devoted to widening the gap. The French were fighting on familiar ground, and the fighting took on the same character as in the invasion in 1914. After breaking French and British defensive positions, but not breaking the line, the Germans moved their forces out on a fan-shaped figure, fighting hardest on the flanks of the extreme front. The situation, while extremely serious, did not assume the critical aspect of the fighting in March. The Allies were resisting stubbornly, giving ground when overpowered, but always maintained a solid front. Reserve forces were coming into action on ground Foch had chosen. The casual reader of dispatches had a sense of profound discouragement, altho real grounds for such feeling were lacking. A long list of captured villages, let alone extensive munition depots, railway trains and hospital establishments, with Soissons in German possession and Reims likely to follow, sounded in Germany enough like the certainty of a coming victory to rouse the lagging confidence of the German people, and to dampen the spirits of those among their enemies who like them regarded the show rather than the substance of events. The German Headquarters Staff was in no position to share the jubilation it was trying hard to excite. The force of Allied resistance remained unimpaired, and any apparent diminution of it had been effected at a disproportionate lessening of the weight and capacity of the German offensive.

The strength of Foch's reserves was beginning to be felt in this "battle for Paris." Opposition was imposed by newly strengthened lines and, with terrific smashes, the French recaptured Longpont, Corcy, Faverolles, and Fresnes, vantage-points in the center of the line leading to the forest of Villers-Cotterêts. At points just east of Château-Thierry, the Germans were hugging the northern bank of the Marne. In the immediate vicinity of Reims, they won Fort de la Pompelle, but their tenure of the position was short-lived; French troops in a counter-attack recovered it. The seventh day of the battle found the Allied line, altho bent back at various points, not so hard prest as on previous

days and seemingly more capable of resisting onslaughts. The fighting between Soissons and Château-Thierry bore witness to the desperate endeavor of the Germans to broaden the perilously narrow salient of which Château-Thierry was

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WHAT WAS LEFT OF TREES IN BELLEAU WOOD

the apex. Men still recalled those well-considered words of prophecy which Foch had uttered a few weeks before: "The wave that is rolling in will break upon the beach."

The supreme crisis of the whole war had been reached, the Central Powers at the last limit of their military strength, France, weakened by four years of fighting, now struggling successfully against a powerful enemy who was threatening her very heart. In two months the whole situation had changed profoundly. Three tired British and four French divisions had had the task of holding the twenty-five mile line between Reims and Soissons. In five days Ludendorff had won an astounding success, penetrating thirty miles, crossing three rivers, cutting three railroads, the greatest of which was the one that fed Verdun, captured 45,000 prisoners, more than 400 guns, large quantities of booty, and brought his forces to within measurable distance of the line

the Germans had occupied four years before.[31] But these gains could not spell victory for him if he did not vastly increase them, and his period of grace was rapidly shortening. His men could not stand his pace indefinitely. He was seeking not merely gains, but a decision. His own people were watching the battle reports, not to hear of the fall of Reims, but of a new Waterloo or Sedan. Nothing else would avail for the German people now.

The arrival of the Germans at the Marne once more, after forty-five months since they were driven away from it, made a profound impression upon the world. The situation, however, at the end of May, bore not the smallest resemblance to that of four years before. In September, 1914, the whole mass of German armies was thrusting forward in a wild effort to crush the French, who had taken their station far south of the Marne on a line between Paris and Verdun.

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A SHELL-HOLE AT BELLEAU WOOD

The action then fought between the Ourcq and the Meuse was a supreme struggle between French and German military science, altho the British played a minor part in the battle and a useful and considerable rôle in the subsequent pursuit.

[31] Cable dispatch from Arthur S. Draper to The *Tribune* (New York).

But none of the conditions which existed in 1914 was paralleled by anything in the situation now. One considerable German army, having broken the Anglo-French front over a distance of some thirty miles between Soissons and Reims, had pushed rapidly southward until its advance guards touched the Marne on a narrow front. This was the ultimate consequence of a local success and the swift and skilful exploitation of that success. There was no indication that there would now be any considerable battle along the Marne itself. The great battle of 1914 was fought far south of that river, not along its banks.

With German armies so near Paris, there was no sign in Paris of a panic. Nearly 200,000 refugees, mostly women and children, had arrived from Marne districts and been sent into Normandy and Brittany. People went about their business with no sign of fear that the Germans would continue their advance. Confidence prevailed everywhere. The long-range gun continued almost daily to send shells into the city, and night brought its airplane bombing raids. Paris was in fact as much attacked as some parts of the Western Front, but its people had long since become used to shells and bombs. Air-raids killed women and children, but people were far from being panic-stricken. Taxi-cabs careened along avenues with their usual reckless speed and dashed down darkened streets. On sidewalks human processions moved on as always. Paris had grown used to war.

Neither the Crown Prince, struggling desperately in the east, nor his Gothas buzzing above her Boulevards, frightened her. Refugees poured into Paris, not only by every available train, but by canal-boats and all other means of transportation. The arrivals one day included the entire population of a village on the Ourcq who had spent three days crowded in a boat with their hastily gathered possessions, all desolate and hungry. Thousands were met by Red Cross trucks loaded with food and as soon as they were fed were taken to temporary shelter at St. Sulpice. They carried a varied array of transportable property—alarm-clocks, umbrellas, mattresses, family relics, live rabbits and goats, cases of champagne, kegs of sugar, crates of chickens, folding-beds, and fur coats. Those who made the

trip in canal barges were for hours within range of German artillery-fire, but the casualties were limited to two babies who fell overboard and were drowned.

The growing German apathy over the checks administered to their drives, and the calm confidence shown by Allied peoples in the face of all reverses, had one explanation. In ths "race between Hindenburg and President Wilson"—to use Lloyd George's characterization of the battle on the Western Front—the odds were running every day increasingly against the Germans. When the British Premier added that "those who knew best what the prospects are feel most confident about the result;" it "could only mean that, with the United States to help, the race would be won." Allied shipyards were launching ships faster than German *U*-boats could destroy them; Allied navies were sinking *U*-boats faster than Germany could build them; Allied crops were promising record harvests in France and England that would release further tonnage to carry American men and munitions to the battlefield. At the same time, many observers believed that another year of war would spell for Germany bankruptcy alike as to her food-supply, her finances, and her man-power. In the world's esteem she was hopelessly bankrupt already. The fighting by June 3 had developed into a series of violent attacks for local objectives, the great rush having come to

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AN AMERICAN BRIDGE ACROSS THE MARNE

Built near Mézy under shell-fire, with 3 men killed and 15 wounded

a complete halt. For the time being at least, the German advance was over. The only material progress the Germans made was northwest of Château-Thierry, where they pushed their lines further westward and occupied the site of Veuilly-la-Poterie, but all that this accomplished was the elimination of a local salient north of Belleau, which the French had retaken the previous day.

The Marne itself in this offensive had no direct bearing on anything. It was simply a geographical location crowded with associations. Possession of its northern banks did not in itself better the German situation. The drive had been undertaken with some much greater object. With the battle-front between the Oise and the Ourcq at the point of stabilization, some estimate of the immediate results attained by the German armies could be attempted. Before they took the Chemin-des-Dames, the farthest German point westward was in the region of Montdidier, a little over fifty miles from Paris, by air-line. From Montdidier the battle-line ran due east, forming the base of a triangle of which Paris was the apex. At Anizy-le-Château, near the Aisne, the Germans were sixty miles from Paris, but now the point nearest Paris was west of Château-Thierry on the Marne, which was about forty miles distant. A compass swung from Paris as the center would have shown the line running northwest at a distance increasing to fifty-five miles near the Oise and shortening a bit to fifty miles around Montdidier. Thus, while the thrust from the Aisne had carried the Germans south twenty-seven miles to the Marne, it had actually brought them only fifteen miles nearer Paris than they were at Montdidier before the Aisne battle took place. Entente apprehension for the future was concerned primarily with the chances of another leap forward in Picardy, or from the Aisne, which would bring the line so near Paris as to make possible a more effective bombardment than the spectacular demonstrations of the 75-mile gun.

The Germans were held up again on June 5 on the west side of the salient. The battle-spirit had not died away from them, but the old German driving power apparently had vanished. The attacks were still violent, but the French found less difficulty in breaking them up than at any other

time in ten days. The reason for this stabilization was simply men—the arrival on the scene of adequate masses of Allied infantry. The same stabilization had been reached, in just the same way, on the Somme and in Flanders. Experience had demonstrated that there was no mysterious potency in the new German method of attack generally credited to Hutier, the secret of which was concentration of huge masses against inferior ones.

A statistician [32] at this time gave some interesting figures of casualties from August 1914 to May 1918. He estimated those of the British at 2,500,000 with 10,000,000 for Russians and 6,000,000 for the Germans. Analyzing German losses, he found that 2,000,000 had been killed, 3,000,000 put permanently out of action by wounds, 1,000,000 incapacitated by broken health—a total of 6,000,000. He figured that the Germans had mobilized between 15 and 20 per cent of their population and that the German available force was 6,000,000. "England," he said, "is seriously damaged; France is seriously damaged; but Germany is more seriously damaged than France and England combined." Moreover, "the inexhaustible forces and resources of an unscathed power—America—are fast rallying to the cause of the Allies and freedom."

It could not be said that the Germans had been definitely stopt, and yet so great had been their casualties that even the Prussian Guards—the pride of the German Crown Prince—had been withdrawn from battle. Not only had the Allies almost everywhere successfully withstood their onslaught, but on several sectors they had taken the initiative and gained ground. Almost everywhere the German line was being held. It had run for a time at an extraordinary pace, measured by the depth of penetration from the starting-point, but rates of progress became confusing because of the transition recently made from a war of position to one of movement. Men still thought of the weight of a drive in terms of the old dead-lock of trench-warfare. Lightly held front lines having been substituted for strongly held ones, the momentum of an attack carried much further. The really important question was not how far an offensive was pushed ahead, but whether its development in a certain

[32] To Lincoln Eyre of The *World* (New York).

direction would or would not have grave strategic consequences. Foch had had no misgivings about letting the German armies overrun the territory between the Vesle and the Marne. He did not greatly hinder their progress. But when they tried to shift their attack from south to west and southwest he stood fast, guarding the approaches to Paris by way of the Oise and the Ourcq.

COURTESY OF THE MARINE CORPS RECRUITING PUBLICITY BUREAU.

A Marine in Belleau Wood

Not a hundred yards away are buried more than fifty Marines

The German effort on this whole front had deeply involved the German reserves. After June 1 they showed more or less complete exhaustion. Ludendorff did not persist on the Somme after the Allied lines covering Amiens had hardened, but he did persist in the Lys Valley after he was checked south and west. Arnim ceased striking for Ypres after he suffered his costly reversal on April 29. Would Ludendorff now court a similar reverse on the line from Noyon to the Marne, or would he fall back on a tactical defensive, like that which he had maintained for many weeks on the Somme, and concentrate his reserves for a fresh effort in a new direction—east of Reims or around Verdun. That was a question which was to puzzle for a time the Allied command and the Allied publics. Germans knew they had failed. One of their most conservative Berlin papers, the *Vossische Zeitung,* known familiarly to Germans as "Tante Voss," published an article from a military correspondent who said:

"It should be emphasized repeatedly, in view of exaggerated

hopes, that a decision can be procured only comparatively slowly. The foe is enabled to organize his resistance owing to his brilliantly constructed railway system, which has junctions and unloading stations at Compiègne and Villers-Cotterets. The German Supreme Command can not well proceed now against the newly consolidated French front, which is richly provided with reserves, and bear the great losses which experience shows are entailed by such operations. When the French brought up big reserves the exploitation of the surprize movement was, to a certain extent, ended. Presumably a certain change will shortly occur in the entire system of battle-operations. The battle can only proceed slowly. A decision can not be procured in a few days. We should, therefore, arm ourselves anew with patience. The continuation of the big offensive will come at the right time and will again mean a surprize for our enemies." [33]

[33] Principal Sources: William L. McPherson in The *Tribune* (New York), The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, The *Evening Post* (New York), *The Fortnightly Review*; The *Tribune*, The *World*, The *Sun*, *The Literary Digest*, New York; The Manchester *Examiner*, Associated Press dispatches.

WHAT IS LEFT OF A CHURCH AT CRAONNE

## VI

## A DRIVE FOR THE OISE AND COMPIÈGNE HELD UP

### June 9, 1918—June 13, 1918

FOILED as they had been in March in an effort to penetrate the Oise Valley from the north, and in a more recent attempt to reach the right bank of the river from the east, the Germans on June 9 launched a third major-attack between Montdidier and Noyon, which aimed to reach the Oise from the west, and then Compiègne. Owing to heavy artillery-concentrations the French were able to inflict terrific losses on them from the moment this attack began. The Germans followed the same tactics which had characterized their preceding offensive efforts, and by concentrating troops far in the rear and rushing them up during the night, made an initial gain. Following a brief but intense bombardment, from midnight until 4.30 in the morning, during which gas was used extensively, their infantrymen leaped to the assault in successive waves. But French artillery had made counter-preparations and French infantrymen, after falling back under the first shock, put up a definite resistance just outside the range of German mounted trench-mortars. On their right and center the Germans penetrated the line for distances ranging from two-thirds of a mile south of Montdidier to relatively two and a half miles at Resson-sur-Metz, in the center, but thence to Noyon the Allied line held firmly.

The Germans resumed the offensive at this point because they had no choice. In spite of losses their foes, by accretions from without, were becoming gradually stronger, while their own depleted ranks, to maintain their strength had to draw on reserves. Reasons were found for a steady broadening of the Allied confidence. Not the least of these was the narrowing of the front of attack. It had extended over fifty miles on March 21; it had shrunk to twenty-five miles along the Aisne on May 27, and now it

extended from twenty to twenty-two miles. Paris was probably right in regarding this as an indication of diminishing power in the attacking masses. But German strategy was rushed for time. It had to strike and to keep on striking. Ludendorff, recognizing the stalemate in the Aisne-Marne salient, found he could not employ three weeks or more in fabricating a new grand surprize on some hitherto untouched sector of the front from Switzerland to the North Sea—further east in the Champagne, for example, or about Verdun. But he could take in hand an offensive supplementary to the drive of May 27, since to do so he needed only to extend the Aisne-Marne operation to the west, using the Hutier group of armies, some of which had helped Boehm and Bülow to capture Soissons, and then had pushed southward to Dormans and Château-Thierry.

The Oise Valley operation was, in fact, only a logical continuation of the offensive of May 27. It had, perhaps, always been the more important feature of Ludendorff's plans to hold this thrust on the Noyon-Montdidier front for the final stroke in the hope that Foch by that time would have been stampeded into shifting the bulk of his reserves further east and south when the real German objective would be disclosed in the smashing of the Noyon-Montdidier side of the big Somme valley salient, with a push toward Paris down the valley of the Oise. It was probable that Ludendorff's new move had been fully anticipated by Foch. Foch had shown his grasp of the situation by letting the Germans go to the Marne and then holding them there with light forces, while keeping the bulk of his strength massed west of Soissons.

The power of the attack on June 9 was not as overwhelming as the attack on the Chemin-des-Dames had been. Nor was the penetration startling when compared with the first day's results in any of the earlier drives. On May 27 the gain had been five miles over a wide front. On the Lys the first day's gain was four miles over a narrow front. The front of the present drive was broader than the front of the Lys drive, but was not half as broad as the front in the Somme drive, and was only two-thirds as broad as the front on the Aisne-Somme drive. It was, therefore, relatively, a

secondary blow. It lacked the element of surprize, had smaller masses behind it, and encountered a better organized resistance than any of Germany's three preceding major-efforts. Notwithstanding the great forces which the Germans next day threw into the line, they did not achieve any considerable advance. Time after time increasingly dense waves of infantry attempted to pierce Allied defenses. Southwest of Noyon they could not produce any effect. They deluged Allied lines to a depth of at least six miles with poison-gas and high-explosive shells, but Allied guns replied immediately with a fire of terrific intensity. Except that in the center the Germans reached Ressons-sur-Matz and Mareuil, every foot of territory was contested bitterly, and the Allied line maintained perfect cohesion, despite all efforts of the Germans to pierce it. The attack was directed immediately against Compiègne. In the opinion of some this section was a vital one, because it contained the valley of the Oise with its great railway and public road to Paris. Any important gain in this direction would bring the enemy out into level country toward St. Just and Clermont, and so enable him to avoid a frontal attack on the forests of Compiègne and Villers-Cotterets, which were of great value to the Allies for defensive purposes.

The battle was described as one of the most furious that had been fought since the war began, with the enemy unusually reckless in wasting life to gain his objectives. At the conclusion of the first twenty-four hours, the impression gained was that the German smash had not brought the results expected. The Allied line had only been bent in the center. At many points the losses of the Germans amounted to a massacre of column after column. There was unanimity as well among prisoners as among Allied combatants that German ranks were torn and plowed with shot and shell. Never, perhaps, had the Germans paid more dearly for an advance which nowhere exceeded five miles. This was the essential fact which governed all that followed because, as the German official press said with a measure of truth, the German objective was not a city or a port, but the complete destruction of the Allied armies; likewise the Allied objective was not to hold a certain geographical area,

but to punish enemy forces so that they would be exhausted, while their own were being constantly recruited from over-sea for the last stroke.

Germany's picked troops were concentrated here in numbers perhaps superior to those of March 21. It was to be a supreme effort, and German leaders hoped it would mark the beginning of the end of Allied resistance. But they knew that the Allies could not be caught napping this time; that the line they assailed would be strongly held, and that Allied reserves were close at hand. Behind the German first line were grouped Ludendorff's reserves. In a battle like this failure to go forward meant defeat. In consequence, losses were ignored. Defenders and prisoners alike agreed that never, even at Verdun, had been seen such wholesale slaughter. It was only the culmination of Germany's iron discipline that forced fresh waves forward against machine-guns and artillery-barrages over ground every foot of which had been "registered" by the defenders. Hand-to-hand fighting had been a rare occurrence in this war, but here it was common all along the line. Men "fought like dogs, with teeth and nails," said an eye-witness, describing the struggle for Courcelles.

In a sense the attack signalized a critical period. The Germans were now too near Paris not to become threatening with every successful advance they made, even tho it

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GENERAL DEBENEY DECORATING AMERICAN SOLDIERS
At the left, in citizen dress, with a soft hat, stands Premier Clemenceau

should be a relatively small one. The French were threatened with conditions in which they would have to make a stand if Paris were to be saved from bombardment. But the assault had not met with the immediate success of the earlier attacks, and it had been accompanied with losses more considerable. We were not yet seeing the final episode in the gigantic battle, but only one of a series of operations preparatory to the final one. While the advance by comparison had been much less than in the three previous attacks, the Germans were really pushing the French off the last natural obstacles defending the roads to Paris, north of the Oise. The ground they had taken was important and it was far too early to dismiss the attack as a failure, but all evidence pointed to the exaction by the Allies of heavy casualties, and this was the most hopeful sign of all.

Ludendorff had now struck four times and on four rivers since March 21—on the Somme, the Lys, the Marne and the Oise—with full strength in each place, hoping to reach the Channel ports or Paris. He had been halted each time after partial success, and was facing a new situation at a time when the first half of the summer's campaign might be considered over. Several great bulges had been created in the Western Front, yet no positions of paramount importance had been lost. Meanwhile, the total length of the line had been increased some fifty miles, and henceforth German armies would dwindle while those of the Allies would increase, because Americans were beginning to swarm into France, and more were coming every day. The great advantage enjoyed by Ludendorff in the first half of his drive would be less marked in the last half, and notably at the end of summer. All the Allies had to do for the next three months was to fight as they had done in the last three—and the crisis would be stemmed. Ludendorff knew his fighting days were limited. He was now drawing on man power to the utmost in order to hold his lengthened battle-front and keep some of his reserve forces at his disposal.

French troops southeast of Montdidier on June 12 turned upon the Germans and administered a severe defeat over a front of about eleven and a half miles between Ribecourt

and St. Maur. The village of Belloy, Genlis Wood, and the heights rising between Courcelles and Mortemer, were recaptured. Foch's men took more than a thousand prisoners and captured many guns. In the center of the line, between Montdidier and Noyon, where the Germans had been able to extend the apex of their drive to Auteuil, they were driven back, but southwest of Noyon the Germans reached Machemont and Béthancourt, the last-named place being on the west bank of the Oise.

This second week of June seemed the veritable climax of the four years' struggle. Along a front of nearly twenty miles the Germans had sent more than a quarter of a million men forward through a sea of blood. No sooner was one battalion annihilated than another took its place and then another and another. Grassy slopes bore a hideous carpet of thousands of German dead, over which new forces advanced with the same madness of sacrifice as of old did the Carthaginians, when they flung themselves into the Roman Moloch's furnace. The bloody religion of militarism that Germany had followed for forty years had now led its votaries into culminating orgies of destruction.[34]

Three critical days of enormous losses had yielded Germany a not very magnificent result in a program that was to reach Compiègne on the second day. The attack had been begun with fourteen divisions at full strength. They included at the center divisions of the Prussian Guard and four other crack divisions were eventually thrown into battle. The best indication that the Germans were having more difficulties than heretofore was the size of the French counter-efforts which were delivered with great strength in the very teeth of German attacks, and were twice successful. The first resulted in the recapture of Mery, while the second, made over a wide front, hurled the Germans back from the Aronde River and restored the original lines north of Belloy and the Genlis Wood. It was reassuring to have proof that the French were present in such strength, and that they not only felt sufficiently strong to hold the Germans in check, but to attack. "Our losses in the last offensive are simply terrific," said a German in a letter written at

[34] Dispatch from Walter Duranty to The *Times* (New York).

this time. "Every one must go into the front lines now, and protection is of no avail. Our sacrifices are dreadful. When will this war end?" There was no doubt that the German people were much perturbed over their losses, but an effort was made to convince them that the *U*-boats then operating on the Atlantic coast would prevent further transportation of American troops. The density of their troop masses was often fatal to the Germans because Entente artillery, machine-guns, riflemen and aviators were able to aim at point-blank range into masses of men. This concentrated fire did terrible execution. Details concerning the beginning of the battle showed that on June 9 fourteen German divisions (about 190,000 men) had joined in the first onslaught. All the units engaged had been brought to fullest strength, having been reinforced after the March and May offensives.

Fierce resistance had checked the enemy at all points. On some sectors the French had turned vigorously upon the foe and forced him to cede the ground he had gained. South of the Aisne the invaders met with unexpected opposition, and, notwithstanding that large numbers were thrown into the battle, their gains were relatively small. The sole result of the attack on the Montdidier-Noyon line up to June 13 was that, by the violence of the attacks east of the Oise and the forced retreat of the French from west of that stream, the Germans had blotted out the Noyon salient and brought the battle-front more into direct alinement with the Aisne. But a terrible price had been paid for this rectification of the line. Whether the Germans were prepared again to offer a huge sacrifice in bending back the other salient from the Aisne to Villers-Cotterets, and so bring the Picardy and Aisne battlefields into a more continuous front, remained to be seen.

Stein, the German War Minister, at this time boasted in the Reichstag that "a great part of the French army has been beaten," but he could have meant only such units as had been opposed to German troops. That a considerable part of the French army had been forced back was true, but nothing else. Had Stein told the whole truth, he would have said that, while the French army had been compelled to

yield much ground, its fighting spirit was unbroken. When it turned it could still make headway, and it had yielded not a foot except at a terrible price to the Germans. Not a single large French unit had been disintegrated, or been captured as an organization, and nowhere during all the terrible fighting of three months had the Germans been able to strike a blow which could have been considered a "knock-out." No crushing military success had been achieved. As for Foch's reserves, which Stein declared to be "non-existent," there were soon to be a million men in France from America, to say nothing of those who were presenting a solid front between the Prussians and Paris. The Foch reserve was increasing, not decreasing, much less was it disappearing. Two months later it appeared that it was Germany's reserves that were non-existent.

The feeling still prevailed in some circles in France that the main effort of the Germans had not even yet been launched and speculation was rife as to when it would come and what its general objective would be, whether Châlons, Paris, or the Channel ports. It was believed that the Germans still had large effective and available forces behind the line, thousands brought from the Russian front. The armies of Foch, however, were everywhere watchful and of such strength and good morale as to lead to a belief that, no matter where the enemy might choose to oppose them, they would be able to give a splendid account of themselves. It was not improbable that Haig's forces would be asked again to measure their strength against the Germans, and that the territory near Arras, or in the Scarpe sector, or before both positions, would be chosen by the Germans as the theater of an assault. In both sectors German guns again were working with the violence that generally presaged an attack. In the Marne sector there was almost continuous artillery activity in the region of Château-Thierry, where Americans were fighting beside the French. There Ludendorff's next stroke was to be delivered, and was to prove his last.

Stabilization for the time at least had been attained. That the measure of German success had been smaller than in any of the preceding drives since March 21 was evident.

It had been so in amount of ground won, in number of prisoners taken, and, most of all, in the fact that, for the first time, the attackers had not put through their piercing operation. In the battles of Picardy, Armentières, and the Aisne, their thrust went through both first lines and Allied battle positions. In the battle for Compiègne the "battle positions" performed the function for which they were created; they stopt the Germans after the loss of first lines. Whether the Germans set out with an expectation of reaching Compiègne, we had no means of knowing, but in every one of their previous attempts they had shown no tendency to limit themselves to predetermined objectives if opportunity offered. Therefore, Berlin might claim that it had attained all that it expected, and yet not do away with the plain fact that the latest German thrust had been stopt. It found the French in far different mood and strength, and that was the essential thing. One reason for the smaller measure of German success was that the blow fell closest to the concentration area of Foch's reserves, —in the triangle, Compiègne-Villers-Cotterets-Paris,—where his reserves had been placed for defense of the capital, or for a movement north or east if the battle should suddenly diverge from Paris and flare up on the Somme or east of Reims.

That the lull on the battle-front only presaged a new and more violent attack was the military opinion in Washington. The impression was rapidly strengthening that the stage had almost been set for a renewal of the main thrust at the British around Amiens with the Channel coast as the objective. None thought of the Marne salient. Belief had never wavered among the majority of officers that the real purpose of the German general staff had been from the first to cut the Allied armies apart by a drive that would carry them to the Channel. Arrived at that goal, massed attacks would be hurled against the northern sector for the purpose of destroying the British army, while a strong defense was maintained against the French in the south. The thrusts already made at Paris were looked upon as well planned and executed feints designed to weaken the Amiens front before the final effort was made there. On no other

theory could these observers explain the sequence of German operations, and on no other basis could the campaign of defense waged by Foch be understood. Strange was it that great events impending in the Marne salient were left out of all these calculations.

Drawn to the Marne by Foch's retreat from the Vesle—a retreat which was voluntary and not under pressure—the Germans now saw Paris as a possibility. They thought the French were on the run, that all they had to do was to keep up with them and continue the pressure while the

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ONE OF THE SMALLER BRITISH TANKS

French fell back. But at the Marne they came to a halt. Foch had retired only to give his reserves time to come up. And they came up when the Germans reached the Marne. Foch left the defense of the Marne itself to relatively small numbers, while heavy concentrations were made along the western leg of the salient, which he knew Germany must attack as soon as her forward movement was checked. Forgetting their main plan, the Germans followed the will-o'-the-wisp of an immediate victory, but when they realized

that the limit of their Marne advance had been reached, that on the Marne, as at Verdun, they were not to pass, they had attempted to return to the original plan of drawing a line from Château-Thierry to Montdidier through Compiègne, and definitely binding together the two fronts, while widening the Montdidier salient. Again it was too late. Just as the British bolstered up their lines along La Bassée Canal, so the French prepared theirs between the Marne and the Aisne. Not only were the French there in force, but American reinforcements, which had been sent originally to the Marne, and had taken part in the fight at Château-Thierry, were shifted to the western leg of the salient, and the Germans were held there unable to move forward, the French and American troops being present in sufficient strength to react and recover ground.

The net result was a check to the Germans. In fact, it was probably the worst defeat the Germans had suffered in the west for two years, except possibly in Flanders in April—that is, at Kemmel Hill. The Germans here used about 300,000 men on a short front of not more than twenty miles. This number during the fighting was increased by several divisions, all of which were more or less roughly handled. There was nothing in German gains which in any way compensated them for the heavy losses. The Montdidier salient was slightly widened, it was true, but not sufficiently so to make any material difference in the relative positions and fighting abilities of the forces engaged. Germany had been forced into a bad position by her own eagerness, and then suffered more by trying to get out of it than if she had remained quiescent. The Germans increased their front, not, however, to the same extent that Foch increased his, for he was everywhere on the inside of a curve.

After the battle, one might look from high ground south of the Aronde Valley toward the long ridge that closed the horizon on the north, and find it strange, almost shocking, to note the quiet beauty of a scene that had been filled with horror a few days before. Green wheat-fields sloped gently away, broken by patches of olive woodland, and rose again more sharply to the purple line of the Méry and Belloy Hills.

All this countryside, however, had been deserted by its inhabitants, except a few. Men and women, here and there, were still to be seen bent at field-work within range of the enemy's guns, as tho they could not tear themselves away from land that was everything to them, or could not believe that the idea of invasion would go further. Perhaps they were too poor, too old, or to helpless to search for new homes. A battle had been lost and then won; the pressure on ambulance cars and hospital-trains had been relaxed; processions of refugees had passed away to the south and disappeared. In three weeks several large towns, especially Soissons, had been destroyed; others, like Château-Thierry and Villers-Cotteret, greatly damaged, and in wide stretches of country the few folks who did not get away were now within enemy lines and subject to servitude. Here were desolate streets and fields and once lovely old churches and farmhouses shattered; the dignity and energy of a laboring population, gone. It would never in our lifetime be the same again; many years must pass before life could renew itself even in other forms. And yet the refugees plodding along the highroads, behind carts full of babies and furniture, rarely seemed miserable. The sun was shining, the State was helping them, and the example of soldiery was before their eyes.[35].

The battle for Compiègne wore itself out, Hutier's troops being unable to renew the offensive. The general results were summed up as follows: Ludendorff had driven a salient into the French front, had got a somewhat precarious footing on the north bank of the Marne, and was threatening Paris down the Oise and Marne; but his way along the Oise was blocked north of Compiègne, and along the Marne it was blocked west of Château-Thierry. On the central road between the two rivers, his advance was held up in the Villers-Cotterets forest. His nearest point to Paris was Chézy, which was thirty-nine miles as the crow flies from the outskirts of the French capital. He was twenty-five miles from Meaux, which the Germans reached in September, 1914, and thirty from the forest of Chantilly, through which

[35] Dispatch from G. H. Perris to The *Times* (New York).

Kluck's cavalry passed during his flank march across the Ourcq in 1914.

That the Supreme War Council had "complete confidence in Foch," was announced on June 4, after the Council had held its sixth session at Versailles. Few commanders had had more difficult tasks to perform than Foch, and none had faced their difficulties with greater skill and fortitude. Fighting a defensive battle against a numerically superior enemy flushed with initial success, he had more than come up to the expectations of those who had always stood for the unified command. Master of many legions, with a superiority of force amounting to between thirty and forty divisions, his adversary had started the campaign with every antecedent advantage in his favor—possession of the initiative, interior lines, undivided control, and homogeneity of fighting strength. Undismayed by circumstances, Foch had acted with a decision and promptitude which inspired all under his command with confidence in his ability to lead them to victory. Operating in a restricted area with the sea at one time behind him, the obligation rested on his shoulders of defending certain strategical objectives, from each of which it was of vital necessity to shut the enemy out. First it was Amiens, then it was Calais, and now it had been Paris. This had limited the strategical freedom of the General-in-Chief, and tied his troops to definite centers. Reserves had to be so disposed that they could be assembled in the shortest possible time and with a maximum of speed at any point threatened by the enemy.[36]

General von Hutier

[36] Principal Sources: Hilaire Belloc in The *Tribune* (New York), *The Fortnightly Review* (London), William L. McPherson in The New York *Tribune;* The *Times,* The *Evening Post,* New York; Associated Press dispatches.

## VII

## REIMS "AT ANY PRICE" AND CANTIGNY AGAIN —KÜHLMANN'S WAR AIMS SPEECH AND WILSON'S WORDS AT MOUNT VERNON

### June 16, 1918—June 21, 1918

BY the third week in June a question that was being debated in Paris with increasing interest, was, whether the Germans, after all, possest, as had often been assumed, anything like a crushing superiority in numbers on the Western Front. The tendency was more and more to discredit the theory that they really had such numbers. Many were asking whether the whole tradition of German numerical superiority ought not to have been given up long before. The fact that the Allies, since the end of March, had been able to bring four great German offensives to a standstill, and that the German High Command was known to have sent urgent orders to bring from Russia to the Western Front every available German soldier, afforded strong evidence to support this view. The peculiar circumstances attending the Austrian June offensive in Italy—its inspiration from Berlin and the sharp check it met, almost from the day it began—tended further to confirm this view. So, too, of an offensive on June 19 against Reims, in which appeared unmistakable evidence of the waning striking-power of the much vaunted Prussian military machine. The German War Minister, Stein, at this time, had announced in the Reichstag that Foch no longer had reserves. It was becoming clear that the thing on Stein's mind was that Germany had none.

Despite the four great drives the Germans had undertaken since March 21, in which many divisions were engaged two, three, or four times, Ludendorff (for Hindenburg was believed now to be in a sanatorium suffering from a nervous breakdown; in any case Ludendorff was the soul, or the genius, evil or good, as Germans might think, of the

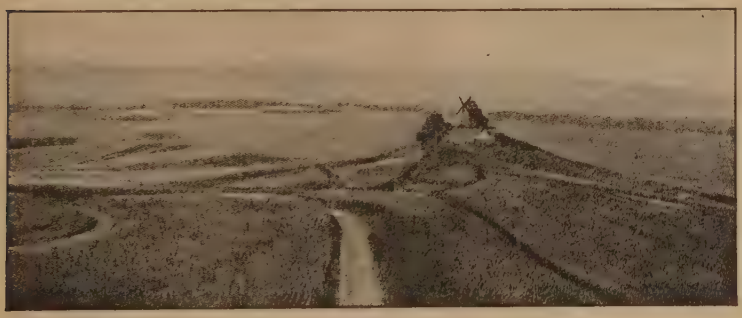
offensive) had been jealously guarding any reserves he may have had. He had planned to make repeated attacks between the North Sea and the Champagne region, his theory being that by giving blow after blow he could eventually wear out the Allied reserves. On this theory he had advanced his lines toward Amiens and Paris, along the Somme, the Marne and the Oise and he intended to keep at it until the Allied reserves were exhausted, after which he expected to throw in fresh divisions for a decisive battle. The year 1918, according to this plan, was to be the "terrible year," a year of punching, smashing, pulverizing, giving the enemy no moment's rest, hammering at him till he was groggy. However much it cost Germany—even a million men—the loss, it was argued, would be worth while if it achieved its object. Germany began her offensive in March and now it was late in June, but the Allied armies had not been broken at any point, and the year for extensive fighting-purposes was three-fourths gone. What was more significant, the power and effectiveness of the Teuton blow were diminishing, and yet Germany now set out to surprize and capture Reims, an attempt in which she failed disastrously, altho Reims had been ordered taken "at any price."

The attack was made on a fifteen-mile front between Vrigny and Fort La Pompelle, forming a half circle about the city on the north, east, and west. Germany afterward sought to minimize her defeat by calling the assault a "surprize fire-attack," thereby suggesting that it was of no more consequence than a raid, and yet she threw into it 40,000 men. Her faith in the bamboozling power of word-combinations had never been better illustrated than in this phrase, not even in a phrase used by Eichhorn when he established martial law in the Ukraine and called it "a state of enhanced protection." "Surprize fire-attack" had an advantage over the Eichhorn combination in that on examination it was seen to mean just nothing at all.

It was only a few days after the fighting closed above Compiègne, that fighting flared up at Reims. During the descent of the Germans from the Aisne and the Marne a few weeks before, the Germans had driven the French lines in at Reims on both sides until the city was enclosed in an

almost perfect semicircle, one end of whose diameter was just north of Ormes and the other north of Fort de la Pompelle. The assault had aimed at prolonging the curve of the semicircle and thus getting the French down into level country south of the city, after which the capture of Reims itself might be accomplished. The French, however, were apparently in force here just as they were on the western flank of the Marne salient, and the Germans were beaten back without making any gains. It was relatively a minor affair, but taken in connection with the failure of the previous German attacks, it contained a measure of satisfaction by reason of the proved security of both French flanks. The loss of Reims itself would not have been alarming from a military point of view, as the city had been under fire for so long that it had ceased to have military value. The Teutonic allies apparently had lost their will to do-or-die here in France as well as in Italy. Their attacks now lacked the spirit and tenacity of earlier days. Instead of driving through Allied lines, with stubborn indifference to casualties so long as an objective was gained, they wavered and then halted in the face of artillery and rifle-fire, the points they were trying to gain far beyond their reach. The opening of a gateway to Paris through the Western Front from Montdidier to the Marne had failed and now the stroke against Reims broke down in its inception without securing new territory.

At the usual, if not unprecedented, hour of 9 o'clock in the



FRENCH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

BETWEEN THE MARNE AND REIMS

This is a typical scene in the vine-growing country of Champagne, with its windmills, and roads winding among masses of dark-green leaves

evening, a German army, under Bülow, made a frontal attack upon the salient of which Reims formed the head. After a bombardment of shot and a volume of gas, smoke, and explosive shells, infantry, under cover of growing darkness aggravated by these artificial clouds, advanced in three divisions on a twelve mile crescent, from the foot of the mountain at Gueux, on the west, to the Fort of La Pompelle. They were repeatedly and everywhere repulsed with heavy losses. So remarkable a success would have been impossible except for the commanding positions the French occupied along a circle of hills west and south. Military experts in London regarded the attack as nothing more than an attempt to divert attention from greater resumption of the offensive elsewhere later.

Paris in its delight at the failure suggested that the reason for making the effort was probably a desire to secure the 40,000,000 bottles of champagne which were stored in Reims cellars. Some were almost inclined to regret that the Germans were not allowed to penetrate one or two of these cellars because it was more than probable that the result would have been the speedy capture of a substantial portion of the invaders in a state of helpless inebriety. The German defeat was more seriously attributed to the remarkable efficiency of the French barrage which was timed well in advance of the German assault, and played havoc both with the attacking troops and with concentrations in the rear. The attack had probably been delivered largely for moral, or advertisement, purposes. Had German commanders been able to trumpet throughout the world the fact that their troops had entered Reims, the effect upon people at home would have been indisputable. At the same time the seizure of the town alone would in no way have helped Ludendorff to disengage his left wing, unless he had also succeeded in securing the more important position formed by the Mountain of Reims which commanded the town from the French side. So long as the French held the Mountain of Reims further German progress south of the Marne was impossible.

At dawn on June 19 American troops again stormed German trenches and machine-gun nests in front of Cantigny in the Montdidier sector, near the scene of their earlier

success. Germans were killed by rifle-fire, machine-gun fire and bayonets. Some of them tried to escape through the barrage crashing to their rear, but few got through, for numerous German dead were found. Prisoners captured said they had orders to hold on at all costs, and this was apparent from the desperate manner in which they fought. The battle was short but deadly. Enemy positions were swept clean of Germans. One machine-gun "nest" containing eight men, had been sprinkling Cantigny for some days, but was blown up by a direct hit from a trench-mortar bomb. American troops in the Marne sector attacked the German line northwest of Château-Thierry on the same day and advanced five-eighths of a mile, driving the Germans back from a small pocket on the northern side of Belleau Wood. The Germans at this time had thrown about 6,000 shells along the American front in the Woevre.

After seven hours of furious fighting, much of it hand-to-hand, the Americans overcame a force of 1,200 Germans. With a few individual exceptions, the whole German force was killed, wounded, or captured. The prisoners brought in numbered more than 250, including four officers, and fifty machine-guns taken. The victory could not have been more complete. There was nothing for the Germans to do but face the Americans or surrender. Rifle and grenade work did terrific execution. German machine-guns were hidden in pits dug in the ground, with the gunners under cover and only the snout of guns protruding. The Germans were not good hand-to-hand fighters; Americans in such tests got far the better of them in the number of casualties inflicted. Of 1,200 Germans it was a good estimate that 700 were killed.

For several of these June days American troops had continued to be engaged in the struggle for the Belleau Wood, the principal value of which lay in the fact that it was a small wedge thrust sharply into Allied lines as a result of the previous American advance in which they had taken most of the town of Belleau, altho they had failed to take the entire wood. While the operation was a local one, that section of the German line from Belleau to Château-Thierry was one of the most important on the entire line south of the Aisne. It was this section, so well defended by Americans

in earlier assaults, which had prevented the Germans from extending their positions along the Marne. It stood as one of the major guards of the road to Paris. The Americans having now gained control of the wood in its entirety had advanced their position materially. The success acquired new importance a month later when Foch began his offensive on the western side of the Marne salient.

There were two standards by which this German offensive could be judged. What the Germans had accomplished depended on its relation to what they had hoped to do and on what they had still to accomplish in order to realize their purpose. They had opened the fighting with successes achieved by methods which took the Allies by surprize and made a profound impression upon the world. Not since the early days of August, 1914, had the Germans in the West achieved anything like the successes they won between March 21 and June 15. They outguessed their foe and harvested the fruits of superior strategy and better tactics. Their haul of prisoners and guns, materials and munitions, recalled their booty in the opening months of the war. But like the victories of Napoleon at the opening of the campaign in 1813 Ludendorff's victories were barren of decisive result at a time when a decision was all essential to him, and when the balance was being restored between the Germans and the Allies in the west. We Americans alone since March 21, had sent to France sufficient troops to replace the losses of the Entente Allies in three months of fighting. The advantage of numbers, if it still remained with the Germans, was slight and was destined to disappear at no distant date in consequence of the rapid arrival of Americans. The tremendous profits which they drew from the collapse of Russia, all the advantages in numbers which were a consequence of the disbanding of Slav armies, were rapidly disappearing and no further accessions of strength to their armies could be expected for the duration of the war. Henceforth time was to run against them steadily to that hour when the American troops would have come in sufficient numbers to put them on the defensive permanently.

Looking backward over three months, there was no reason for pessimism on the part of the Allies, no reason for

despair. The Allies had weathered the greatest military attack ever made in history. They had parried the Germans when they had more power and more chances of success than they ever could have again. The Allied successes along the Oise, the even greater local victory at Reims, the magnificent rally of Italy on the Piave against the Austrian oppressor—these were signs of better days and the promise of happier fortunes. Already there were coming from Berlin, and more clearly from Vienna, rumblings of popular discontent and disappointment, which might be exaggerated, but

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could not be dismissed. If the Allies could fight during the next three months as they had fought in the past, the beginning of the end was in sight. This did not mean that peace was actually at hand—but that the road to victory stretched out straight ahead. One thing was certain: the Germans were weaker, numerically and morally, than at the beginning of the offensive. From prisoners it was learned that fewer German divisions were on the west front than there were a month before.

Ludendorff had flung practically every reserve division into the offensive. From now on his campaign had to be carried on by divisions which already had been in the fight-

ing at least once. There were not more than five absolutely fresh divisions which had not been in this offensive. Barely a baker's dozen existed which had not participated in drives. More than thirty had been withdrawn from an active front and were training and resting. Ludendorff had about fifty divisions available for action, but eighty-one had been used in the first week of the Somme thrust, when they were absolutely fresh and specially trained. Another important factor was the waning morale of German troops. At the start they had been aroused to a feverish pitch of expectancy. Leaders had told them that nothing could stop the new German war-machine. Once started, it would run straight to victory. But for four successive times, after a flying start, it had come to a dead halt. Ludendorff, however, would strike again until the last glimmer of hope was gone, altho everything pointed to the fact that he had reached, if not passed, his maximum of power.

Intensive aerial operations were in progress at this time over and behind the battle-line. A welcome indication of declining German strength had been found in the complete superiority of the Allies in the air. British, French, and American aviators were flying at will over German lines, bombing railways, airdromes, and ammunition-dumps; spreading dismay among German troops in concentration camps, driving away airmen and bringing back invaluable information of the disposition of the hostile forces. During the month of May alone Allied airmen destroyed 894 enemy planes. One British ace, with a long string of victories to his credit, was said to have accounted for twenty-five within two months. Germany had lost many star pilots. At least fourteen German aces, who were each credited with twenty or more victories and whose aggregate successes totaled 363, were known to have been killed or captured. Among these were Captain Baron von Richthofen, who had shot down 80 Allied planes; Lieutenant Max Muller, whose score was 38; Lieutenant Bulow, whose record was 28; Captain Tvscheck and Lieutenant Wusthoff, both of whom had marked up 27, and Lieutenant Louzer, who was said to have accounted for 24 Entente airplanes. Many other leading pilots from the Kaiser's force, whose reputations were almost as great as those

named, had lost their lives or were in prison-camps. Pilots of bombing-machines killed or captured included Captain Kleine, commander of the English squadron, which conducted raids over the British Isles; Captain Koehl, who received the order of Pour-le-Mérite, and Captain Weese. In 1917, thirty-two prominent German airmen, for whom the High Command had claimed an aggregate of 551 air victories, were killed in action. Allied aviators had apparently attained absolute mastery of the air. They were carrying the aerial war far behind the German lines. Altho having the best weather of the whole war there was in May and June apparently little fighting, because of the extreme caution of German airmen. Their activities were confined to night-bombing.

British airmen had brought down 4,102 hostile machines during the year ending July 1. During the same period the British lost 1,186 planes. On the Western Front they destroyed 2,150 hostile airplanes and drove down 1,083 out of control. In the same period naval aviators shot down 623. On the Italian front, during the last quarter of the year, the British destroyed 165 enemy planes and drove down six out of control; on the Saloniki front in the last half year they had destroyed twenty-one and driven down thirteen; in Egypt and Palestine, from March to June, they destroyed twenty-six and drove down fifteen. Records showed that British air superiority was continuously progressive, wherefore it was safe to assume that when America's output became effective, the Allies would have great advantage. During the month of June, 1,040 airplanes and seventy-one observation balloons were reported downed on all battle-fronts and in Allied raids on Germany. This was the third monthly total of losses since the beginning of the war and compared with 1,162 in March and 1,248 in May. Of the airplanes downed, 786 were German, and 255 Allied. On the Western Front 781 were reported downed, of which only 210 were downed by Germans. The remaining 571, consisting entirely of German machines, fell to the British, French, Belgian, and American airmen or gunners. British airmen destroyed 237 German airplanes and drove 210 down out of control. In June Allied airmen disposed of 162 Austrian machines.

During the first few days in July, forty-three German airplanes and three observation balloons were accounted for. Eight British planes were missing. More than thirty-five tons of bombs were dropt on German towns, including Trèves and Coblenz.

Meanwhile in the war zone victory had dawned for the Entente in Northern Italy. On June 19 the flood-waters of the Piave began to interfere with the Austrian bridges, and by that time the last Austrian offensive was quite obviously checked. No further attempt was made by them to attack. While stubbornly resisting the Italian counter-pressure they were obviously in grave difficulties and two days later, on the night of June 22, they began to withdraw troops. The Piave battle was of extreme importance to the Entente. It showed that the Italian army was again in splendid fighting trim. It had smashed the offensive power of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. All this had immense effect on the general military situation in the west. It was the first great Allied success in 1918, and it followed a series of German advances which had tried Allied powers of resistance to the utmost. The Italian victory was a turning-point in the war. In one sense, Kemmel Hill, early in April, had been the turning-point; in another Château-Thierry, early in June; but the Italian victory on the Piave had larger significance, in that the Austrian military power, as an offensive force in battle was forever eliminated from war calculations, which was not yet true of the German military forces in France.

After the defeat of the Austrians on the Piave, Herr von Kühlmann, the German Foreign Secretary, as a fillip to Austrian disappointments and German expectations, warned the people of the Central Powers, late in June, in a Reichstag speech, that the war might last through this year and the next. In some quarters his speech was considered a bid for peace, in others as another step in the process of letting down the German people, while in still others it was taken for gloom and pessimism that were camouflage. Since his speech followed the optimistic forecasts of the Minister of Marine, von Capelle, regarding submarine activities, the boasts of Hindenburg about the might of the German army, and the Kaiser's promises of an early and successful termina-

tion of the war with a "strong peace," it came as an anti-climax, calculated to cause strange misgivings among people who had lived for four years under the abnormal strain of the bloody struggle. A notable feature of the speech was a frank acknowledgment that Russia remained "an uncertainty," that the German Eastern policy had not proved the success anticipated, and that even Germany and Austria were in disagreement over Poland. He did not point with any pride to Ludendorff's work in the west, but put out a "feeler" regarding Allied views concerning peace. Perhaps the chief value of the utterance for the Allies was that it showed the folly of Germans in concentrating their attention on the war-map and ignoring such great factors as war-strain and raw materials.

The point that commanded most attention, however, was his flat contradiction of what the Kaiser had been saying again and again only a few months before. The Kaiser had often spoken dramatically of conquering a peace in the west with the sword as had been done in the east; the "historic moment" had come, he had recently said, for the German army to impose a "decision on the battlefield," Germany having placed her trust in her sword. But the Kaiser's minister declared that "in view of the magnitude of this war and the number of powers, including those from overseas, that are engaged, its end can hardly be expected through purely military decisions alone and without recourse to diplomatic negotiations." Probably this speech was intended largely for home consumption, and had as a distinct design to prepare the German people for a prolongation of the war. The Imperial promises of March of a speedy end by an overwhelming victory had been definitely withdrawn. While Kühlmann predicted a "new and great success to our arms" before winter, he encouraged no hope of a decisive success. Once more had the Kaiser and the General Staff fallen into gross miscalculations. The boastful flourishing of the sword in March had led to this confession of its futility in June. In the light of Germany's utter collapse four months later Kühlmann's confession acquired something of a historic importance, since it fixt late in June as the time when German leaders had begun to see that the war was

lost, and yet lacked the courage to confess it to their own people.

As to peace terms, Kühlmann demanded a restoration of Germany's overseas dominions, which had been completely conquered by the British, "freedom of the seas" of a kind which in some mysterious way would be more to Germany's advantage than that complete freedom which her commerce had enjoyed before the war, and what they somewhat vaguely called security for Germany "within the boundaries drawn for us by history." Critics of the speech found it interesting to inquire how far back in history he was prepared to go. Would he, for instance, be willing to cede Silesia to Austria—Silesia, which had been seized by Frederick the Great without a shadow of excuse. Again, would he be willing to restore German boundaries by the surrender of Schleswig-Holstein, which had been taken from the helpless Danes only a half century before. Nothing could have been more hopeless than persistence in this attitude by the ruling power of Germany. It made the Allied enemies of that power more convinced than ever that their only safety lay in Germany's utter defeat. It was strange that in so long a discourse, covering so many phases of the situation, present and prospective, Kühlmann made no reference except in the phrase "those from overseas," to the participation of America in the war. Perhaps he feared that to do so would have been a dangerous suggestion to the people of Germany that we then had 900,000 men in France.

The Kühlmann speech caused great depression among the German people, who were still believing in a German victory, but were now told that the war must continue indefinitely if they were to win at all. It was declared on good authority that the speech had really been drafted by Kühlmann, after consultation with the Kaiser, who had "approved it literally," as had Chancellor von Hertling. Such was the storm raised by it, however, that Kühlmann felt called upon to offer his resignation, and within a fortnight the Kaiser accepted it.

The first anniversary of the arrival of our soldiers in France was celebrated by their final success in cleaning out Belleau Wood and by an announcement that we had taken

over a third sector along the Alsace front. We now had not fewer than eight divisions actually on the front, and of these four or five were in line between Verdun and Belfort, while the Second Division, including the Marines, were about Château-Thierry, and the First Division was still holding Cantigny, which had been won by their own efforts. Eight divisions, as our divisions were organized, meant only a little less than a quarter of a million men. Half as many more, at a conservative estimate, were in active service with French or British units, while official announcements from Washington indicated that of the 900,000 Americans in France, two-thirds, or 600,000, were fighting men. We were only beginning to have engagements; we had, in fact, had hardly more than skirmishes; our losses, measured by contemporary standards, had been insignificant and our officers and men were still untried troops in the matter of training and experience: but in morale and in physical material, they were the best now in Europe, because we alone still had young men to send to the front, men who were not yet war-wearied by the strain of four years of ceaseless struggle.

On July 4, at Mount Vernon, President Wilson made an address which was generally taken as all that he or the European members of the Entente intended to say in reply to Kühlmann's "peace kite." He stood before the open tomb under trees that had been planted by Washington, and against that picture presented the world-struggle against "governments clothed in the strange trappings and the primitive authority of an age that is altogether alien and hostile to our own." The keynote of the President's speech was contained in a statement in which he defined the ends for which the associated people of the Entente world were fighting. "There can be but one issue," he said. "The settlement must be final. There can be no compromise. No half-way decision would be tolerable. No half-way decision is conceivable." Any one who had expected him to answer the speech of Kühlmann with its hint of negotiation and the bait held out for conciliation on a purely German basis, got an answer in that sentence.

The speech was listened to by ambassadors and ministers from every Allied and neutral nation represented in Wash-

ington. Beside him stood Mrs. Wilson, a few close friends and members of his official family, with a circle of Marines, and back of them a sea of people, some thousands of them pressing forward to catch his words and join in the applause. The scene was not the less impressive because of its informality. The stage had not been set in any way. The open tomb with its interior piled high with wreaths which the President and after him the diplomats had deposited there on the low marble sarcophagus, were the only decorations. A single aide was the only man in uniform close to the President. The Marines further back in service dress, gave the scene its military tinge. Attachés of legations, in the brilliant uniforms and glittering orders that had lent so much color to many official affairs in Washington were absent. There seemed to have been a deliberate effort to avoid all appearance of pomp. For music there was a piano hidden in shrubbery and the singing of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "The Star-Spangled Banner."

President Wilson exprest in this speech the firm convictions of the American people and all free peoples in this battle against Prussianism. The object for which civilization was fighting would not be achieved, he said, as if in reply to Kühlmann, "by debating and seeking to reconcile and accommodate what the thinking people of the world desire, with their longing for justice and social freedom and opportunity." Those objects were felicitously defined in a single sentence at the end of the speech: "What we seek is the reign of law based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind."

Ludendorff and his master, as well as every German intelligent enough to understand the President's meaning, once he had read and soberly considered this Mount Vernon address, would have seen in it the handwriting on the wall for all their schemes. The German war-party, from the Kaiser down to the dullest Junker, now had an opportunity to understand well the war-aims of the United States. These aims, Wilson said, included: "The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, or of its single choice, disturb the peace of the world; or if it can not be perfectly destroyed, at least its reduction to virtual im-

potence." That meant that, if the German people would not put away their delusions and set their feet upon the necks of their mad military masters, Germany would either be destroyed, or brought so near to destruction that she would no longer be a power for evil among civilized people. It was worth while for sane men to take heed of so terrible an admonition, spoken as it was in Mount Vernon, by the authoritative voice of a score of nations that had the power to execute the threat.

Kühlmann had stirred up a hornet's nest at home when on July 10 word came that his resignation had been accepted by the Kaiser. The event marked another step in the still inexorable march of reaction and conservatism in the governing power of the Empire. Slowly but certainly every public man in Germany whose work was characterized by any liberal tendencies had been tossed overboard. Measured by some standards, Kühlmann could scarcely have been called a liberal, but he was as broad as the Atlantic compared with men of schools led by Westarp and Reventlow, by Tirpitz and the Fatherland Party. All in high places who had dared express anything approaching a progressive political philosophy had fared in the same way as he; all had had their official heads cut off—Bethmann-Hollweg, Zimmermann, Jagow, Lichnowsky, Helfferich and now Kühlmann. Each in turn essayed to point the way to something like liberalism and each paid the full price of his temerity. Germany at the top seemed further from being liberalized than she was when the war began, but at the bottom she was beginning to feel the leaven working. Far-sighted men realized that it was not possible forever to delay the march of progress. The purblind others who would rather have seen Germany go down with the flags of autocracy flying than to see her living as a free nation, were bent upon holding for themselves all the traditional powers that had for many years been withheld from the people.[37] Ludendorff, whose hand was seen in Kühlmann's fall, had got himself under a greater and greater necessity of vindicating militarism. When Kühlmann resigned, Ludendorff's position was assured for a few months longer. He had been challenged and he had

[37] Herbert Bayard Swope in The *World* (New York).

to strike to vindicate himself, to launch a blow quickly in order to divert attention from the political struggle in which eventually he was to be enveloped in utter ruin.

Kühlmann was succeeded by Admiral von Hintze, a devoted follower of Tirpitz. His appointment indicated the complete domination of the situation by the Pan-Germanists, who were clamoring for victory both east and west as against a growing sentiment in Germany in favor of what was called "a moderate settlement in the west," so long as the fruits of victory could be reaped in the east. An early renewal of Germany's supreme military effort to force a decision was foreshadowed in this ministerial change. The significance of Kühlmann's speech, however, could not be effaced; no resignation could alter it.

The appointment of Hintze aroused the wrath of a large portion of the Reichstag majority parties to an even greater extent than it was stirred up in the last days of Bethmann-Hollweg and during the shuffling course of Dr. Michaelis. Before Kühlmann was appointed Foreign Minister, Hintze had been Ludendorff's favorite for the place. He was a typical German sailor with a successful, if not brilliant peace-time naval career behind him. The most memorable incident in his life took place in 1898 when he was Adjutant to Admiral von Diedrichs before Manila, and the German Admiral, in taking a rather threatening attitude, sent Hintze with a message to Dewey. After receiving Dewey's answer Hintze started to return when Dewey called him back and said: "By the way, you can tell your Admiral, too, that if he really wants a fight he can have one now." Tirpitz had found in Hintze a kindred Pan-German spirit and greatly admired his wit and resolution. He had also become an Imperial favorite. A man of the world, widely read, of affable manners, yet blunt of speech, greatly liked in society, and a ladies' man, Hintze spoke English even better than Kühlmann. He knew English literature much more thoroughly than he knew the literature of the Fatherland. He could quote Shakespeare by the hour and Milton by the page. A Pan-German of Pan-Germans, he often made the veriest Prussian reactionary jealous of the boldness of

his words and acts.[38] It was well understood everywhere that the going of Kühlmann and the coming in of Hintze meant that, in obedience to Pan-German demands, civil government had been abandoned in Germany. The military power was supreme. The offense of the retiring secretary, in declaring or admitting that Germany could not hope for a victory by arms alone, that she must have resort to diplomacy, had been unpardonable and so the war party would have no more of him.

Following the change in Foreign Ministers came a speech on July 11 by Chancellor von Hertling to the Reichstag, representing Germany as ready for peace, but declaring that Mr. Balfour and President Wilson had "closed the door to it." And yet both of them had asserted in public their willingness to entertain "any honorable and sincere proposals." The Chancellor added that Germany's enemies were bent on the "destruction" of Germany and yet Lloyd George only a week before had repeated that the Allies did not desire "a foot of German territory" and that Germany could have peace at once if she was willing to accept the terms laid down by President Wilson, and these implied no destruction of Germany. They demanded that Germany renounce her conquests and give up all ideas of posing as dictator, or dominator of Europe and the rest of the world.

The first thing that German statesmen had to realize was that they had to give the Entente peculiarly convincing proofs of their sincerity, something in fact that could be accepted as atonement for their perfidy toward Russia and Roumania. All the moral presumptions were strongly against them. For four years their words had been weaving a tangled web of bad faith and deception until they could no longer expect prudent men to take their mere word. Germany had put herself under a moral handicap in seeking to negotiate with other nations, for she had taught other nations to distrust all that she might say. The German Government no doubt was sincerely anxious for peace, but before it could make other Governments believe its word, it had to produce overwhelming evidence that it had become reasonably honest.

[38] Amsterdam dispatch from George Renwick to The *Times* (New York).

Chancellor von Hertling had made a bad beginning in his speech in what he said in the Reichstag about Belgium. Germany, he said, had no intention of holding on to Belgian territory, but would retain it as a "pawn" on the chessboard of a peace conference. The moral insensibility of Germany was clearly revealed in that statement. Germany had got into Belgium as a robber and Belgian territory was stolen goods still in her possession. Germany now offered to restore these stolen goods to the rightful owner, but only on such terms as a burglar whom police had surrounded in the house where he had collected his plunder might have proposed to the police, "I am willing to give up my swag, but you seized my set of jimmies out there in the yard. You must give them back to me before I turn over the silver I have stolen. I don't want the silver, but I have to keep it as a pawn." German statesmanship was in fact under a black cloud that had grown blacker and larger as the war went on. It had to do something to clear itself before it could expect the Entente nations to meet its advances as if they were made by men of demonstrated ability to keep faith once it was pledged. It was not a question of putting on sackcloth and heaping ashes on Germany's head, but of taking the necessary steps to show that she sincerely desired to be restored to the comity of nations.[39]

[39] Principal Sources: The *Wall Street Journal*, The *Evening Post*, The *Tribune*, The *World*, The *Times*, New York; Associated Press dispatches.

## VIII

## ONE MILLION AMERICANS IN FRANCE—THE AFFAIR AT VAUX—POLAND'S REBIRTH AND JUGOSLAVIA'S FLAG—"THE FOURTH" AND BASTILE DAY

July 1, 1918—July 17, 1918

BY July 1 we had 500,000 men in line in France and another 100,000 would be available before August 1. Altogether we had sent over the sea 1,000,000 men and were now adding to Foch's resources at the rate of 200,000 men a month. When we should have a million men actually fighting in France—and we were to have them toward the end of this year's campaign—the German, if he had not won the war, beyond all question would have lost it past recovery, for a million this year meant at least two million next and a postponement of the German cause to next year meant adjournment without date.

The actual total of Americans in France on July 4 was 1,019,115. The President deemed the fact of such importance that he issued a statement giving details. Every one of the million was not only completely equipped, but there went with them three months' supplies of everything they would require. In other words, if transportation across the Atlantic should have ceased, the American soldier in France would have known no shortage for three months. The War Department had thus made good on the biggest contract any warring nation ever essayed. This million had been transported with total losses at sea of only 291. Four hundred troop-laden transports had carried the men over and only two American ships—the *President Lincoln* and the *Antilles*—had been caught by submarines, and these were on their way back after having delivered their loads of troops. One-half or more of these men had been carried

in British ships. Not a single troopship under American convoy had been lost. In June alone we had sent 276,372 soldiers over the water. That was the month when German *U*-boats came to our coasts to discourage the transporting of American troops. "When the German submarine operated off our coast in June," commented Secretary Baker, "our answer was to ship more men." In February when Mr. Baker appeared before the Military Affairs Committee of the Senate, just before he made a visit of inspection abroad, he had announced that we would have half a million men in France early in the year and a million and a half available for service in 1919. This estimate of February had actually been doubled by July. Moreover, instead of a million and a half available by the end of the year, we were to have two and a half million, and by January 1 were to have 4,000,000 men under arms.[40] This was an achievement without parallel in military history, and in it the nation might well take pride. France had asked for men, and we had already sent her more than the most optimistic had deemed possible. From the United States, 1,000,000 men—say, 750,000 fighting men—fully offset all the troops the Germans had been able to withdraw from the Russian front and throw into battle in Flanders and Picardy. Again, in Canning's words, "the New World had been called in to redress the balance of the Old."

The arrival of this million of men held out great promise for the Allied armies when the spring campaign of 1919 should open. Most of the men would be available for duty before the fighting ended in the autumn, but would not be thrown into action unless absolutely necessary. They would be trained in every possible way, given every sort of experience, be used in local attacks and in raids, given practise in defensive work, so that when the spring campaign opened they would be equal to the best troops in Europe with the additional advantage of being fresh, their enthusiasm not dulled by the deadly monotony of years in the trenches, and as eager to end it all as were the troops of other powers in 1914. The German offensive launched on March 21 had served to impress on us, not only the

[40] Washington dispatch to The *World* (New York).

urgent need for money, but the necessity of straining our efforts to throw into Europe every trained man we had and as quickly as we could get them over. Whatever Germany had gained, therefore, as the result of her offensive was now more than offset by the number of men we had sent. Nothing could have demonstrated more conclusively than the German offensive what our task was, and nothing could have been more prompt than our efforts to perform it. Germany's only chance now lay in Russia, since by organizing Russia to her own uses she could afford to make almost any sacrifices in the west in order that she might hold on to what she had in Russia. None dreamed in July, 1918, that in four months more Germany would be asking for an armistice in the west—not even men who were close to the American command in France.

A high record for daily production of rifle- and pistol-ammunition was set on June 27, when approximately 27,000,000 cartridges of every description were turned out in plants working for the United States. This was exclusive of commercial production or work for other governments. The week ending June 20 was a high record of production of army rifles with a daily average of 10,142. During that week 55,794 rifles of the modified Enfield and Springfield

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THE "LEVIATHAN" ARRIVING AT A FRENCH PORT WITH AMERICAN TROOPS

types were produced, together with spare parts, which, when assembled, would equal several thousand more. At the same time, 3,280 rifles for Russia were manufactured.

Since the American troops had taken their place at the front, English papers had devoted much attention to us. One correspondent [41] in a week's tour along the line of communications visited docks built by American labor, and with American material, traveled on American railways, sent telegrams over American wires, telephoned to Paris over an American system served by "hello" girls from the United States; bought stores at American shops and motored in American army automobiles. On a train journey of more than a hundred miles he was never for more than half-an-hour out of sight of an American camp. There were American towns and villages of wood on both sides of the line; cavalry depots, remount depots, casualty clearing-stations, regular stations, hospitals, all the paraphernalia of war, and every scrap of it was American. He had seen dozens of hospital-trains built for the American Army; had motored through a valley wherein there would soon be 80,000 hospital-beds; had seen thousands of German prisoners at construction-work for the American Army; piles and piles of canned goods, stored at more than twenty bases, showing that the Americans would never have to ask their Allies to feed their army, no matter what the submarines might do.

Five companies of American Army bakers were seen baking thousands of pounds of bread every day and sending it to troops fighting on American fronts. Meat was being brought from the United States, unloaded by American labor, put on American freight cars drawn by American engines, and put in cold storage. There were docks, harbors, waterworks, gas-plants, machinery shops, munition works and railways at military bases, that had been built on a scale "simply stupendous." At one French port, he saw a troopship with her sides a brilliant example of marine camouflage. Slowly she steamed into her dock, her decks crammed with cheering, singing Americans, just "tickled to death" to be in France. Other ships were stead-

[41] The *Daily Express* (London).

ily arriving. During March alone 275,000 tons of shipping arrived and were unloaded in various French ports. After the ships were unloaded, they were reloaded with ballast within a few hours and sailed again for America. The greatest wonder of this particular port was the railway-yard approaching completion. Four thousand men were at work on it.

Deliveries of new ships by American shipyards during the last week of June totaled 129,978 tons, which was at the rate of 6,758,856 tons a year. These deliveries were made in advance of other ships which were to be launched in the next week, as a Fourth of July celebration. Production in June amounted to 280,400 dead-weight tons, making the total for the year to date, 1,084,670 tons. The June production, which was at the rate of 3,364,800 tons a year, was the greatest output of ocean-going mercantile tonnage ever completed in any one month by any nation. It came within 15,000 tons of the world's record for shipbuilding made by British shipyards in May, but in that record were included all classes of vessels. Of the month's output steel shipping totaled 262,900 tons, and wooden ships 17,400 tons.

GEN. D'ARMAN DE POUYDRAQUIN
Commander-in-Chief of the French Alpine troops, or "Blue Devils," a detachment of whom came to America in 1918

On July 4, around the Atlantic coast from Portland, Me., to Portland, Ore., and on the Great Lakes ports ninety-five new ships went into the water with a "splash." This event marked a period

of great achievement for the Emergency Fleet Corporation and established the new United States merchant marine as a formidable war-time and maritime factor. The more notable launchings, which totaled nearly 500,000 tons (a figure which exceeded the tonnage lost by American shipping since the war began by 150,000 tons), were held at San Francisco, Oakland, Seattle, Newark Bay, Aberdeen, Washington, Tacoma, and Portland, Ore. Three steel cargo-ships of 11,800 tons were put over the ways at San Francisco, three steel ships of 9,400 tons at Oakland, two of 7,500 tons and one of 3,800 tons at Seattle, three of 5,500 tons at Newark Bay, one of 10,000 tons at Elizabeth and ships of 4,000 or 3,500 tons in twos and threes at the other shipways. Of the ninety-five ships forty-one were wooden. Almost hourly throughout the day ways were freed. The first launching was officially recorded at one minute after midnight, when at Superior, Wis., the *Lake Aurice,* a steel vessel of 3,400 tons slipt down. Shortly after dawn a 7,500 ton ship was launched at Shooters' Island.

America's merchant fleet had now grown to 10,040,659 gross tons. In the fiscal year ended June 30, 1,622 new ships had been constructed. The Union plant of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation made a world's record by launching 47,800 dead-weight tons, represented by four ships, in one yard in one day. A second record was made by this plant by building one of the ships, the *Defiance,* a 12,000 ton boat, in thirty-eight days. Immediately after the launching, six keels were laid, making a third record. Seventeen American war-vessels were launched on the same day, and the keels of eight others were laid. The craft put overboard included fourteen destroyers, a gunboat, and two mine-sweepers. There were now in this country 159 yards, with 819 shipways, compared with 61 yards and 148 ways a year before. Uncle Sam was becoming the world's greatest shipbuilder. Of these 159 yards, 72 were for steel ships and 80 for wooden hulls, while three were intended to construct composite and concrete emergency ships. As yet only 115 yards were fully tuned up, while 33 were not more than half ready and 11 less than half ready.

About 750 of the 819 ways were available for building a

merchant fleet, 50 being occupied with naval contracts, and the rest on private hulls not yet commandeered by the Government. The ways available respectively for steel and wooden construction were substantially equally divided—327 for the one and 333 for the other, but of those yet to be completed there were five times as many for steel hulls as for wooden. The Government program called for the building of 1,856 passenger, cargo and refrigerator ships and tankers, ranging from 5,000 to 12,000 tons each, with an aggregate of 13,000,000 dead-weight tonnage besides 200 wooden barges, 50 concrete barges, 100 concrete oil-carrying barges, and 150 steel, wood and concrete tugs of 1,000-horsepower for ocean and harbor service, which aggregated a total of 850,000 dead-weight tonnage. Exclusive of these, the Government had 245 commandeered vessels, that had been taken over from foreign and domestic owners. These averaged 7,000 tons each and aggregated a total of 1,715,000 dead-weight tonnage. This made a total of 2,101 vessels, exclusive of tugs and barges, which would be put on the seas, with an aggregate of 14,715,000 dead-weight tonnage. Five billion dollars were required to finish the program for 1918, 1919 and 1920, but the expenditure of this enormous sum was to give America a merchant fleet aggregating 25,000,000 tons. On July 1, 1917, there were in the United States not quite 45,000 men engaged in the shipbuilding yards. On July 1, 1918, we had a force of 300,000 men in the yards and 250,000 in Allied trade.

With the launching at Hog Island on August 4 of the 7,500 ton *Quistconck,* sponsored by Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, President Wilson and a notable gathering being spectators, the stage of quantity-production of ships was reached in the building program of the United States. From this time forward the increasing output of vessels would not merely offset the naval efforts of Germany, but would steadily make up the deficiency in world tonnage. The *Quistconck* was the first ship to be launched from the great Hog Island shipyard.

By July 2, at the tip of a salient driven into the Allied lines by the Germans late in May, Americans and French

won further important ground near Château-Thierry. The attack was local in character, but its success proved important in future operations in that part of the battle-front nearest Paris. The assault was aimed at the hamlet at Vaux, on the south side of the Château-Thierry–Paris road, and on the northern slopes of Hill 204. Vaux was about two miles from Château-Thierry. It was carried by a rush of one French battalion and the Third Brigade of the Second American Division. The Germans almost immediately began counter-attacks in an attempt to regain the lost positions, but their efforts failed. The Germans suffered heavy losses, at least 500 prisoners being taken, and one entire German regiment was officially reported as virtually annihilated. Every detail of the thrust was planned and executed by American officers acting alone. It was the most finished piece of warfare in which the new troops from overseas had yet been engaged. Following a heavy bombardment, which lasted all day, American units recovered a considerable stretch of the Paris highway and entered the Bois de la Boche, capturing machine-guns and attaining their objectives. Fighting in the air was active, not only during the bombardment, but during the struggle next day. German fliers were out in force also, and there were many duels in the air.

Altho the operation against Vaux was in cooperation with the French, the victory in the main was American, since it had been planned by the American staff. Every man had his objective given to him. Maps with every house marked and with photographs of prominent buildings were issued. The heavy artillery-fire which drove the Germans out of the back areas had such an effect that their communications had been disrupted before the attack From early morning American guns were in action, reaching crescendo about 6 o'clock at night. As the Americans went forward the Germans poured bullets from machine-guns thickly concealed in the wood, but in only one part did they put up real resistance. Forty minutes after the attack began Hill 192 and La Roche Wood had been captured. Meanwhile Vaux was entered. All the Germans

left in the village were dead or prisoners.[42] The Marines were not at Vaux. At the time of this operation they were thirty or forty miles further north, where within a few weeks they became engaged with their division in Foch's counter-offensive.

Twelve hours before the infantry advanced, American guns, firing American shells, manned and directed exclusively by American gunners, had unlimbered for their work. Vaux was then completely intact except that its walls had been somewhat nicked by rifle-fire, or stray shrapnel, and many panes of glass, according to American scouts, were missing. Here and there a roof gaped to

COURTESY OF THE MARINE CORPS RECRUITING PUBLICITY BUREAU

WHERE THE GERMANS GOT NEAREST TO PARIS

Here, in a small unnamed field on Les Mares farm, fifteen kilometers west of Château-Thierry, on June 4, 1918, some Marines captured three Germans at a point furthest west from the German line

heaven in token of some preliminary range testing, but Vaux was still a town, a place of habitation with not a building but had its four walls standing. There was hardly a structure in Vaux that was not of stone. Three days later Vaux was an utter and complete ruin, a mere heap of shattered masonry. Not a building was left. Only a few jagged walls remained. The center of the town, the chief point of the American fire, was battered flat. The Château-Thierry road running through the heart of Vaux and down which, on the first day of June the Germans had passed on

[42] Cable dispatch from Herbert Bailey to The *Times* (New York).

one of the most determined of their pushes toward Paris, was piled high with huge fragments of blasted stone.[43]

In individual units and as divisions our men had done better than was expected of them. The little affair at Seicheprey had made a profound impression. Château-Thierry, Belleau Wood, and Vaux confirmed it. There was some feeling in our High Command that at Seicheprey our first line had stayed in position too long, that it should have retired more promptly, but French officers and men who saw the performance praised the courage and tenacity of the men who "stuck it" unreservedly, and insisted upon decorating the colors of the units involved. The thing Americans could feel about their army in France was that its arrival in large numbers was one of the great achievements of military history, that the way it was taking hold had brought new hope and confidence to the Entente Allies, and that we were already a real factor in the war.

Large American units had not yet fought in a great battle, but we had done what was asked of us. At Seicheprey, Cantigny, Château-Thierry, in Belleau Wood and Vaux our men had done their work in a manner which had not escaped the attention and praise of British and French officers. On the British front on July 8, the Twenty-seventh American Division, New York State troops, which had been training with the Second British Army since their arrival at Brest on May 30, fought a minor action on the east Poperinghe line of the Ypres and Kemmel Hill salient. The action consisted of constructing and occupying the second position opposite Kemmel. The enemy opposite the Twenty-seventh Division consisted of the group of armies under Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.

July 4 became a "Glorious Fourth" on the West front. In honor of our natal day French and British carried through four brilliant attacks, yielding material gains in territory and nearly 3,000 prisoners. In one of the British attacks American units cooperated with Australians. So it became a day of unity, fraternity, and victory. Foch was continuing his "feeling out" strategy, striking constantly at suspected thin spots and gaining information which would

[43] Cable dispatch from Cameron Mackenzie to The *Times* (New York).

help him to guess the direction from which the next German offensive would come. The Allies were uncomfortably cramped on lines covering the Channel ports, Amiens, and Paris. They lacked elbow-room. Foch could not afford to yield ground freely anywhere between Reims and the North Sea. Every mile of ground he could gain in this part of the battle area would count heavily in his strategical scheme.

The British made two advances on the Somme front, the more important one at Hamel, directly east of Amiens, on the south bank of the Somme, northeast of Villers-Bretonneux. Possession of Villers-Bretonneux had been bitterly contested after the first German offensive toward Amiens died down. The British now occupied it. There had been no other infantry fighting of importance in this region for many weeks. The attack on July 4 by Australians and Americans was a complete success, the advance extended to and beyond the Vaire and Hamel woods, east of Hamel, the average gain in ground over a mile. Fifteen hundred prisoners were captured. Just north of the Somme and below the Ancre, another advance of 500 yards was made on a 1,200 yard front. Several hundred more prisoners were bagged. This action was in effect a prolongation of the advance on Hamel.

The French made two attacks on the west side of the

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THE DESTROYED BRIDGE AT CHATEAU-THIERRY

The bridge was blown up by French and American troops during the German advance on Paris in May

Aisne-Marne salient on July 3. Both were in the same neighborhood north of the Aisne and northwest of Soissons. They advanced nearly half a mile on a two-mile front north of Moulin-sous-Touvent, and next day moved forward west of Autrèches on a front of a mile and a quarter, where they made a gain of 550 yards. Later in the evening they extended the attack north of Autrèches and up toward Moulin-sous-Touvent, on a front of over three miles, and netted a gain of 800 yards. The prisoners taken in these two actions numbered about 1,100. Two weeks before it had been questioned if Ludendorff would delay his next blow after July 1, but he had withheld it later than July 1 in spite of the fact that every hour of inaction was weakening Germany. America had had a cheering Fourth of July. The question now was would Ludendorff so act as to make the great holiday of France, the Fourteenth of July, less cheering?

What was considered in Entente circles the rebirth of a nation took place in Paris on June 22, when the President of the French Republic gave flags to regiments of the newly instituted Polish National Army, composed of Poles who were already serving on the Western Front, and many of whom had come from the United States early in the war. Thereby, and for the first time in more than 100 years, the White Eagle of Poland, on its crimson ground, was able to wave over European battlefields. The ancient warrior-race that a century of oppression had been unable to subdue, saw thrown to the breeze again the symbol of its independence after having been so long forbidden to fly it under pain of death. Polish war-songs that had echoed through a thousand years of national life once more were sung unchecked. The eyes of Polish soldiers who had fought in this war from the beginning now glistened with tears at this realization of a dream which four generations of Polish patriots had cherished in vain.

In a short speech of eloquence and sincerity, President Poincaré affirmed the resolve of France to fight for Poland's freedom as for that of her own ravished provinces. The flags he presented, he said, had been given by Nancy, the capital of despoiled Lorraine; by Belfort, the hill-fortress

that looks toward Alsace; by Verdun, the citadel of resistance for liberty, and by Paris, the heart of France. The other Allies were with France in this attitude, having taken their resolve at the Versailles Conference. America, through the mouth of President Wilson, had set forth Poland's right to independence, absolute and complete, with access to the sea, as one of the prime objects of the war. More than half the Polish soldiers on the Western Front had come from America to risk their lives that their homeland might obtain liberty. Every man in Polish regiments was a volunteer and many already wore the badge that France reserves for the bravest men. One of the standard-bearers at the ceremony was Lieutenant Chodseko, who had had a leg torn off as he charged with a French regiment in an attack on a Somme position two years before. As he lay on the field fainting and apparently dying, he cried to his comrades: "I die for France and Poland!" By a miracle his life was saved, but he was so crippled that he now required a sergeant's arm to support him in the final march past at this ceremony. He had reengaged in the new reborn army of his country. Chodseko's face was chalk white as he took the flag from the hand of M. Poincaré, but his eyes blazed with a spirit unconquerable.

The President pinned the War Cross on a flag that had been presented to the Polish contingent in 1914 at Bayonne, New Jersey. Pierced by thirty-seven bullet holes, it had been borne in the Foreign Legion by Count Sobanski, now a Captain, who, great landed proprietor as he was, enlisted at the age of 44, as a soldier of the second class. Another bearer of a historical name, Prince Radziwill—like Count Sobanski decorated with the French War Cross—spoke of new plans made for the Polish Army and of what the Poles in America could do to help. Now that official recognition had been given the Poles as an independent ally, they expected thousands of recruits from the large Polish population of the United States. The sons of a race that under John Sobieski had held Europe against the Turks and had smashed the barbarous Order of Teutonic Knights some hundreds of years before at Tannenburg, one of the bloodiest battles of history, would not be deaf to that call.

Those who organized the new force expected to create and maintain a large army, once their countrymen across the Atlantic were assured of American sympathy and cooperation.

There were other reasons besides sentiment for Entente support of Poland's claim to independence. A free Polish Republic within its former boundaries, embracing 24,000,000 souls bound to the Allies by ties of gratitude and common ideals, would form a buffer State between the Central European Powers and disunited Russia. A free Poland would bar German penetration toward the east. There had formerly been ground for fear that the mass of the Polish nation, whose civilization since the Middle Ages had vied with that of France and whose commercial activities had surpassed those of Russia, might be carried away by Bolshevist theories that had wrought such havoc among ignorant Russian peasants.[44]

On July 4 in Washington was witnessed another inspiring scene. The flag of another new nation, which Allied victory in the war would bring into being, was unfurled. Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes there saluted for the first time the flag of a united Jugo-Slavia, which was to be formed out of Serbia, Montenegro, and the southwestern provinces of Austria-Hungary. Washington was selected as the scene for this ceremony because of the lead taken by the Government of the United States in announcing its sympathy with Jugo-Slav liberation and unity. Here in America there had been much activity in behalf of the national movement of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The Fourth of July was selected as the day because the principles of freedom established by the American Revolution were essentially those which animated the Jugo-Slavs in their struggle against the Dual Monarchy.

The new flag had the old red, blue, and white horizontal stripes used by Serbia and Montenegro. But on the blue stripes were interwoven the arms of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia. The flag was unfurled in the agricultural ground, after a parade, in which hundreds of Jugo-Slavs in costumes and members of Sokol societies in uniform followed the banner, carried by four little girls—a Serb, a Croat, a

[44] Cable dispatch from Walter Duranty to The *Times* (New York).

Slovene, and "Betty" Baker, daughter of the Secretary of War. Several thousand Jugo-Slavs and Americans of other origin were present. The Serbian Minister, Dr. Lioubomir Michailowitch, raised the flag while the Jugo-Slav national orchestra played the Serbian anthem.

At a conference held in Washington late in September, leaders of the Czecho-Slovaks, Jugo-Slavs, and Poles agreed upon a common program of constructive aims as part of the peace settlement. Such an understanding was regarded as an essential preliminary to any adjustment of the nationalist aspirations of races subject to Germany and Austria-Hungary. In all their history internal dissension had been the bane of the Slav peoples. Capacity for political compromise which had been the real preservative of liberty among English-speaking nations, had not been among the gifts of the Slavs, and it was hopeful of augury that they had begun to acquire it now. Of the expected new arrangement of states in Central Europe, the geographical position of Poland made Poland the keystone. Eight million Poles in Galicia, two millions in Poznania (Prussian Poland), and about ten millions in Russian Poland, made a total of twenty millions as a population for the new State. Had the Austro-German solution of the Polish question prevailed, the new Poland would have contained only ten millions.

Russia, early in the war, began an endeavor to bring together the three fragments of Poland dissected by the partitions of the eighteenth century. This embraced a promise of Polish autonomy and accompanied an appeal made by the Grand Duke Nicholas to the Poles. But it was plain that to complete the formation of the new State there would have to be a fourth lopping off from the Austro-Hungarian State, because, if the new Poland were only a question of incorporating Galicia in an independent Poland, indeed if it were only one plan of yielding the Trentino to Italy, and giving Bosnia and Southern Dalmatia to Serbia, then the Austrian-Magyar coalition might still remain powerful, and Czecho-Slovaks and Croato-Slovenes would be left absolutely helpless. The erection of Czecho-Slovak and Jugo-Slav Commonwealths in a Middle-European Confederation, was quite as necessary as

the constitution of a Polish State, in order to save Europe from a renewal of Germany's "Drang nach Osten," which was a real, if remote, cause of the war.

In Independence Hall, Philadelphia, revered for its memories of the times when representatives of 3,000,000 American colonists there proclaimed their independence, the delegates of a larger number of present-day American colonists gathered on October 26, 1918, to declare freedom for 60,000,000 people in that Mitteleuropa which Prussia had planned to subdue by blood and iron, and rule with the mailed fist. These men representing races some of whose very names were new in American ears, Jugo-Slavs, Czecho-Slovaks, Poles, Ukrainians, Uhro-Russians, Greeks, Italian and Roumanian Irredentists, Albanians, Zionists, pledged their all to the Allies, reasserted that "all Governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed" and subscribed their faith in a League of Nations.

Never until 1918 had England officially celebrated the Fourth of July; nor had French and Italian cities vied with each other in honoring an American President on America's National Birthday; nor had South-American nations adopted that holiday as their own; nor had our own commemoration been formally participated in by scores of races not English in origin, but who had made America their home. But the day was now no longer ours alone. Hereafter, in Hall Caine's phrase it promised to be "the Independence Day of the World," the world's democracy having seemingly adopted our Fourth. In New York men of forty-two races took part in a parade—Albanians, Armenians, Austrians, Belgians, Bohemians, Bolivians, Canadians, Cubans, Chinese, Central Americans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Finns, Greeks, Germans, Hollanders, Hungarians, Irishmen, Jews, Japanese, Lithuanians, Mexicans, Norwegians, Peruvians, Poles, Portuguese, Russians, Roumanians, Serbians, Scotsmen, Swiss, Ukrainians, Venezuelans. In Philadelphia an almost equally spectacular parade was accompanied by the signing in Independence Hall of a pledge of allegiance to the country of their adoption by representatives of thirty nationalities. In South America, several sister nations officially adopted the day as a national holiday. Nation-wide celebration occurred

in Great Britain, France, and Italy. Italians joined the names of Garibaldi, Rizzio, and Wilson. Florence conferred the freedom of the city upon President Wilson.

Hundreds of thousands saw the New York parade which, from early morning until late afternoon, swept up Fifth Avenue. There had never been such a display in that city. It was called "the pageant parade of Independence Day" by a Mayor's Committee that had organized it as a demonstration by Americans of foreign birth of their loyalty to their adopted country; but it was more than a pageant, more than a parade, and went further than a mere display of loyalty by citizens born abroad. Observers who had seen great New York parades for forty years said it surpassed them all in brilliancy of color as well as in the variety of races represented. Estimates as to the number of marchers varied, but the general opinion was that from 70,000 to 75,000 were in line. "Born in Germany; Made in America," "Uncle Sam the Best Uncle"—these sentiments on two banners called forth special applause. They were borne by Americans whose former homes were Germany and Finland.

The parade swept up Fifth Avenue for more than ten hours. American, French, British, and Polish soldiers, sailors, and marines, workers from shipyards and munition factories, Red Cross nurses, Young Men's Christian Association and Salvation Army Workers, "four-minute men" and teachers of patriotism, in fact, every branch of the many-sided armies that have fought the wars of modern times and representatives of forty-two foreign nationalities. In this long, kaleidoscopic pageant, now bright with splendid costumes, now drab with columns of civilians, marching with a solemnity of spirit that brought its meaning home impressively to those who looked on, there was slowly woven a picture of fighting America as a land of many races and tongues, but one ideal. In no other land could such a procession have been arranged, much less thought of. Men, women, and children, people of every race, and from every quarter of the globe, poured forth in one vast, unified stream to declare their Americanism and rejoice in it. In a city long noted for many tongues but one political faith, it was the most polyglot celebration of Independence Day ever known.

War had raised our great melting-pot to a high point of fervid patriotism. A flock of airplanes made a brave show in battle-line over the city. In the river our own ships and those of our Allies bore many flags. A hundred bands, and perhaps more, broke upon the keen bright air of a wonderful July day as mild and gracious as a mellow day in autumn.

New York was only an example of what went on all over the United States, and not alone there but in ancient cities across the great waters, cities grown weary with achievements and renown, Rome, London, Paris, Florence, and the new cities of British dominions, Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland, Toronto and Halifax. In San Francisco, Charles M. Schwab, Director-General of the Emergency Fleet Corporation, who had journeyed across the Continent for the occasion, told his auditors, who were largely men in the shipbuilding trade, that, if they stood up to their job, they would "make the Kaiser take his medicine lying down"—a prophecy literally fulfilled before the war was really over when the Kaiser was sick in bed in the Dutch manor-house, or "castle," to which he had fled.

London celebrated the day with an enthusiasm and wholeheartedness in which she surprized herself and forgot her reserve. American flags were flown and American soldiers and sailors seen everywhere, and great crowds collected to see them. The bells of St. Paul's rang a greeting. Special celebrations of the Holy Communion were held in churches. The Stars and Stripes flew alongside the Union Jack from the Victoria Tower at Westminster, from the Prime Minister's residence in Downing Street, and from the principal Government offices. In Central Hall, at Westminster, under the shadow of the historic Abbey and close to Parliament House, an Anglo-Saxon fellowship meeting was held, Americans and British filling the great hall to the doors. Copies of President Wilson's speech at the opening of Congress in April, 1917, were distributed as "a new declaration of freedom, a charter for humanity and world peace."

These exercises being over, Americans gave London the most novel outdoor afternoon it had had since the war began, in a baseball game between the Army and Navy at

the Stamford Bridge grounds, which was the first of such games at which royalty had ever been present. Queen Alexandra and Princess Victoria arrived first. Then the King and Queen and Princess Mary were ushered quietly into the royal box by Admiral Sims. Irregular shouts broke into a measured chant of, "What's the matter with King George? He's all right!" When the King heard the words, he took them as a true democratic welcome, and flushed with pleasure. A few minutes later, with Admiral

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AMERICAN MILITARY BAND MARCHING THROUGH THE ARC DE TRIOMPHE IN PARIS

Sims, he left the royal box and appeared on the diamond where he actually put the ball near enough the plate for the catcher to put his hand on it—a feat not always accomplished by eminent citizens who have essayed the same task in opening games in America. At Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Bristol, Queenstown, and elsewhere in the United Kingdom there were enthusiastic celebrations.

In Paris, Brest, Cherbourg, Havre, Toulouse, and particularly in pleasant villages where Americans were quartered, there were celebrations. General Foch's words in a despatch to General Pershing were keenly realized: "It is for independence we are fighting. With all our hearts we celebrate with you the anniversary of Independence Day." The whole country was a-flutter with the Stars and Stripes, schools closed, business suspended. France now had another national fête-day and a remarkable event occurred in Paris. For the first time since the United States became a nation, a British Ambassador (Lord Derby) attended a Fourth of July celebration. In a speech he declared that "Even if we had not been allies, I should have come. I say now that I wish to thank America for the best licking we ever got. It has done us both a lot of good. We are grateful to you because that licking taught us how to treat our children; it is the reason why we now have Australia and Canada, and even South Africa, fighting beside us to-day." As an especial mark of esteem for America, Paris, Brest, and Lyons, named streets and squares after President Wilson.

The Stars and Stripes waved over a large part of Entente Europe that day. Millions of people in allied and neutral countries were inspired by our flag with a hope that the principles of which it is emblematic, the inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and to government by consent of the people governed, would soon be victorious in the World War. The celebration that had overrun Great Britain and taken possession of France, penetrated Italy, and traversed the Mediterranean to Corfu, where Serbian Government officials attended High Mass in honor of the holiday. There were celebrations in Egypt, Siam, India, and on the Pacific. In Australia demonstrations were made in all the principal cities, and in Japan, the Philippines, and Hawaii. American boys celebrated the day with their English and French comrades in arms at various sectors on the front.

In South America the day was celebrated in unprecedented manner. Brazil, Peru, and Uruguay declared a national holiday. Argentine gave special permission for a display

VAUX AFTER ITS CAPTURE BY THE AMERICANS

In the lower left-hand corner are seen American troops patrolling the ruined village

of the American flag. There were more American flags in the business district of Buenos Aires than are usually seen in American cities in peace times on the Fourth of July. President Irigoyen declared that "Argentina's sympathetic approval had followed the United States step by step." All the provinces in Chile observed the day. Chilean newspapers applauded the words of President Wilson in expressing the vows of his nation to continue the war until victory was achieved. China, the immemorially old country, now a young Republic, remembered the holiday. East and West met. Asia and Africa alike heard the Liberty Bell.

For the second time in its history Paris saw American troops march through its streets, brilliant with flags. On the Fourth of July, 1917, a battalion of khaki-clad men in felt hats, newly arrived and then a curiosity to Parisians, had marched in Paris past cheering crowds. More men in khaki now marched, but the felt hats were gone. Troops wearing dented steel helmets marked the difference. Some of the men who marched had come straight from trenches that barred the road to Paris to the Germans. From the shambles of Belleau Wood, from shell-swept Bouresches and newly captured Vaux, from the very banks of the Marne, came these troops to be welcomed as if they had come to New York. If New York could have seen them in their stained uniforms, their faces still bearing the marks of the strain of months of fighting, it would have been swept off its feet by a storm of enthusiasm. They marched through streets lined ten deep with spectators, and each was decorated with flowers. There were 3,000 of them, 1,000 from the trenches and 2,000 escorting troops. It was a memorable sight when the procession passed down the Champs Elysées, one of the world's most beautiful streets, in a way suggesting the main drive in Central Park, and headed by French Cuirassiers with brass helmets and horse-hair tassels. Then came French and American officers on horses, escorting American troops in solid ranks, and troops from trenches, marching in platoons,—sometimes with ranks a bit thinned, —marching like men who were tired but proud. Every spectator's head was bared as the American flag passed. Sometimes children ran into the street to give flowers to

color-guards, so that when the flags passed under the Arc de Triomphe they had become gay with bright blossoms.

Scarcely a building failed to bear the Stars and Stripes, the streets a waving mass of color. The scenes about the Place de la Concorde recalled some of those witnessed during some great parade in New York, when automobiles got hopelessly tangled up in dense throngs. It was American Day not only in the Place de la Concorde, but throughout Paris. Americans everywhere were greeted

AMERICAN TROOPS IN THE AVENUE PRESIDENT WILSON IN PARIS ON JULY 4, 1918

with cries of *"Vive l'Amérique! Vive la liberté!"* To these Americans replied, *"Vive la France!"* All the poilus wore little American flags.[45] Newspapers were filled with articles and pictures relating to the Fourth. Some of the best known writers in France contributed special articles, among them Maurice Barrés, former premier Painlevé, Gabriel Hanotaux, Eugène Brieux, and Edmond Rostand. Dispatches from Cherbourg, Limoges, Toulouse, and many other provincial towns described enthusiastic celebrations.

[45] Paris dispatch from Thomas M. Johnson to The *Evening Sun* (New York).

Toulouse had an especially notable celebration, a feature of which was a proposal by the Municipal Council to rechristen the Place Toulouse and call it the Place du President Wilson.

Enthusiasm in Paris reached a climax when several thousand American and French soldiers marched through the former Avenue du Trocadéro, newly dedicated as the Avenue du President Wilson, and onward to the Strassburg monument in the Place de la Concorde. Crowds of people that jammed every available inch of space and every window in the buildings along the line of march, on roofs, and even in trees, cheered themselves hoarse as company after company swung past to stirring tunes played by a double band. The ceremony of opening the new avenue named after President Wilson had occurred at 9.30 o'clock in the presence of President Poincaré and amid the acclamations of an immense crowd. The walls of the Louvre, which had looked gray and grim with locked doors and hidden treasures since the beginning of the war, were now ablaze with the colors of the two Republics. The black mourning which had draped the statue of Strassburg since 1870, when the Germans took Alsace-Lorraine, was relieved by the red, white, and blue of America and France.

Do the utmost they could, Americans had hard work to honor the Fourteenth of July as France had honored the Fourth. Colonial as well as Continental France had kept our day as if it were theirs as much as ours, with fine fervor and genuine feeling. Great personages in official life, dwellers in obscure villages had joined in commemoration of the common festival of freedom and democracy. It was no debt of ancient gratitude that our soldiers were repaying to France, that was an unpayable and unforgettable obligation; but the remembrance of her service to us had added to the zeal with which we fought for her, for ourselves, and for all free peoples. As the Fourth of July, 1918, was a holiday that crossed the frontiers of every free State, so the Fourteenth of July became in 1918 no merely French festival. While it commemorated the fall of the Bastile in 1789, it now predicted also the fall of the giant fortress of German absolutism. Germany had sought to

preserve the ancient world order of serf and vassal under a military aristocracy, and nations had banded themselves together to break her evil power. Never in her marvelous history had France meant so much to us.

The destruction of the Bastile had been in itself a declaration of independence made thirteen years later than our own. The Bastile, a fortress of Paris, at the old gate of St. Antoine, had come down from medieval times. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, it had ceased to be used for military purposes as formerly but had become a dungeon for prisoners of State. While ordinary criminals were sometimes confined in it, its chief use was to punish political offenders who were often spirited off into its dim and gloomy cells without due process of law as we now understand that term. On July 14, 1789, as the opening act of the French Revolution, it was stormed by the populace, seized, and finally razed to the ground. Its fall was regarded then as it has ever since been regarded as a triumph of Liberty. Its site is now an open plaza in Paris, marked by a tall bronze column as a memorial to the patriots, who caused its fall. From North to South and from East to West our Nation on July 14 did honor to France by observing celebrations of that anniversary. Meetings took place in scores of cities—some reports said as many as 250 all over the country. Smaller towns and villages also paid tribute to France.

At high noon the booming of guns was heard from New York Harbor. At forts, naval stations, and training-camps, military and naval ceremonies occurred. Special services were held in many churches. French and American aviators performed unusual flying feats. The event which crowned the day was a meeting in Madison Square Garden where Charles E. Hughes presided. In his opening address he referred to the burden that France had borne almost alone in the first terrible onslaught of the war. When he quoted President Wilson's declaration that the wrong done to France in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine "should be righted," the crowd gave way to a long-continued cheering. Two other speeches which called forth great enthusiasm were those of Earl Reading, the British High Commissioner,

and Ignace Paderewski, the pianist. Earl Reading said the British people joined with him and all the Allies in a tribute of admiration and affection for the French people, "for their endurance, their fortitude, and their heroism."

The evening closed with a tableau described as "The Gathering of the Allies." No account of it could adequately convey the emotion that surged over the audience, when, at the call of France for help, the Allied nations were shown, one by one, rallying to her side. At a place reserved in the center of the Garden, a detachment of French sailors took a stand in answer to a bugle-call to arms, led by the tricolor. A French band played the "Marseillaise," the sailors presenting arms. The bugle-call was then sounded in turn for Belgium, Britain, Italy, Serbia, Poland, Greece, and America, all of whom responded. In each case soldiers and sailors presented arms while national anthems were played. Included in this tableau were Scottish and Canadian kilties, Garibaldi veterans in scarlet, Greek soldiers and sailors and Serbian war-veterans. The flags of the Allies were then grouped, while the men marched round the garden to a continuous round of applause. It was a fitting climax to a meeting which symbolized the regard and friendship which the Allies of France had toward her. The following message, which President Wilson had sent broadcast throughout the country and cabled to President Poincaré, was read that day in thousands of American churches and at public gatherings:

"America greets France on this day of stirring memories with a heart full of warm friendship and devotion to the great cause in which the two peoples are now so happily united. July Fourteenth, like our own July Fourth, has taken on a new significance, not only for France, but for the world. As France celebrated our Fourth of July, so do we celebrate the Fourteenth, keenly conscious of a comradeship of arms and of purpose of which we are deeply proud.

"The sea seems very narrow to-day, France is so close a neighbor to our hearts. The war is being fought to save ourselves from intolerable things, but it is also being fought to save mankind. We extend our hands to each other, to the great peoples with whom we are associated and to the peoples everywhere who love right and justice as a thing beyond price and consecrate ourselves once

more to the noble enterprise of peace and justice, realizing the great conceptions that have lifted France and America high among the free peoples of the world.

"The French flag flies to-day from the staff of the White House, and America is happy to honor that flag."

In Paris that day nothing showed more characteristically the whole-hearted manner in which France was devoting herself to the prosecution of the war than the fact that,

AMERICAN TROOPS IN PARIS

A crowd has gathered while American soldiers, having left the Invalides, are on their way to the tomb of Lafayette in the Picpus Cemetery in the Faubourg St. Antoine

instead of delirious rejoicings as for a festival as was the case in former years, with bands at every street crossing and open-air dances lasting throughout the night, the most striking feature of Bastile Day was the sale of bonds in order to raise money for national defense. These sales went on at eight centers of the city, including the Place de la Concorde, the Place de l'Opéra, the Place de l'Étoile, the Place du Trocadéro, and the Place de la République, the

site of the Bastile. At the Opéra there were six booths, of the kind that had usually lined the Boulevards at Christmas time for the sale of toys. Inside each were two women clerks, kept busy all day selling "Bonds de la Defense Nationale" of the value of $1 upward. Throughout the afternoon people stood in line at each booth, awaiting their turn to buy. Similar scenes were reported from other points. Most of the bonds sold were for short terms, redeemable in a month at the will of the purchaser, or at two months with a slightly higher rate of interest. The French genius for thrift and the fine patriotism of the masses of the people were seen at their best on this occasion. The vast majority of the purchasers were obviously people of small means influenced by considerations of patriotic duty to place their savings of $5, $10, or $20 at their country's disposal.

A few days later (July 17) Lyons, the second city of France, gave the name of the President to its newest bridge, one of the finest in Europe. Before a vast multitude which blackened both shores of the Rhone and stretched for miles up along heights and cliffs which wall in the city, William Graves Sharp, the Ambassador of the United States, officially acknowledged the honor. The Prefect of the Rhone, in introducing Ambassador Sharp, hailed President Wilson as the philosopher and statesman of the age. M. Herriott, the Mayor of Lyons, in christening the bridge, added that the city deemed it an honor to link President Wilson's name with its own and said the bridge would remain as a monument to the unselfish action of the United States in intervening in the war in behalf of endangered humanity. He welcomed the military and diplomatic representatives of the United States and gave the freedom of the city to bronzed American fighters who were present. In marching across the bridge with fixt bayonets, these soldiers received a tremendous ovation. They were the first American soldiers the city ever had seen. They were followed by Italians, Serbians, British, African, French and Territorial and Foreign Legionary detachments.[46]

[46] Principal Sources: *The Literary Digest*, The *Evening Sun*, *The Outlook*, The *Times*, *The Journal of Commerce*, New York; The *Daily Express*, London; The *World*, The *Tribune*, The *Sun*, New York; Associated Press dispatches.

# ON THE WESTERN FRONT

## Part XVII

## FOCH'S GREAT VICTORIES

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CLEMENCEAU AND PERSHING LEAVING A RAILWAY STATION IN FRANCE

# I

## GERMANS HELD UP EAST AND WEST OF REIMS—AMERICANS FIGHT AGAIN AT CHÂTEAU-THIERRY AND ON THE SURMELIN RIVER

July 15, 1918—July 18, 1918

IN resuming their offensive, the German High Command at one time apparently had had the stage set in two places —one for a drive against the British, with Abbéville as their objective, the other for an attack in the Champagne, aiming at Châlons. Somewhere back of the German lines were forty-four divisions (660,000 men) of the Kaiser's best troops,—his army of maneuver with which to support this drive—a highly mobile and well trained hammer-force rejuvenated after the Aisne attacks. It had taken about forty days to prepare for another stroke. Forty days from June 6 would bring us to July 16 as the date when the attack would be made. The greatest result for the Kaiser probably would have been attained by reaching Abbéville and so cutting the British army off from the French, or forcing the British lines to fall back on the Somme and give up the Channel ports. But the cost of such an effort would have been terrific for the Germans. The next best prize, omitting Paris, was Châlons, because an offensive in Champagne, reaching to Châlons, might force the Allies back to a line reaching through Châlons to St. Mihiel, which would have given the Germans a new line of railroad communication with their own territory on the Rhine through Metz, Châlons and Château-Thierry and would have greatly strengthened that portion of their front. Either of the two drives would have been easier of accomplishment at that time than a direct drive at Paris. Moreover, with the British cut off at Abbéville, or forced back on the Somme, or with them-

selves in possession of Châlons, the Germans would have been in much stronger positions for making a drive on Paris afterward.

A few weeks before the new stroke began a letter that had originated in the German Imperial household, was captured on the front with a statement in it that a heated discussion had taken place between the Kaiser, the Crown Prince and leading generals as to whether the offensive should be made directly against Paris or further north toward the sea. The Crown Prince favored trying for Châlons and then for Paris and the young man won out. Accordingly it was planned to start the attack on July 14, the great French holiday. Bad weather, however, caused a delay of twenty-four hours. The Germans therefore aimed to cut the railroad which ran from Paris to Verdun *via* Châlons, which was the principal food-line to the French front in the Champagne. Could an attack in the Champagne be launched so successfully as to envelop Verdun and cause its evacuation, American and French armies, holding the Alsace-Lorraine border would be outflanked and so forced to fall back in order to avoid being cut off. Moreover, the gaps at Belfort and Épinal would have been thrown wide open to a German invasion of southern France, in fact the entire string of border fortresses, as well as French territory south of the Champagne front, would have fallen into German hands. This would not have ended the war but it would have given Germany a tremendous advantage in the peace offensive which she proposed to start as soon as winter put an end to the fighting. This was the reasoning behind the German offensive and it was sound enough, as mere reason, but it all hinged on making a successful drive through Champagne.

By July 10 the new blow was believed to be a matter of days only and the hardest blow the Germans were now capable of. Much was printed regarding the delay—that it was due to "Flanders fever," a sort of grippe then prevailing in Germany, to lack of men, to the building of roads over which big guns could be brought up, and to the low morale of the German troops. The truth was a mixture of all plus other things. Owing to shortage of raw

materials, Germany could produce only a limited output of munitions, making it necessary for her to economize over a long period. Prisoners taken after the Hamel fight declared they had had no food for two days, and there had been much illness in the army due to "Flanders fever," to grippe, to "Spanish influenza," or to whatever the strange malady should have been called, and which eventually spread to many parts of the world including the United States.

The delay was mainly due to the necessary preparations. Shells had to be made and accumulated in what were considered sufficient numbers, and there was the question of concentration of artillery. As the attack to be successful had to be a surprize, this concentration had to be made cautiously, transports taking place mainly at night, and that took time. The training of men for the particular task at hand and their concentration in sufficient numbers had to be conducted with that attention to detail which had become strictly German in character. Every foot of the terrain had to be gone over until the men were thoroughly familiar with it, various phases of the operation being carefully rehearsed. Nothing could be left to chance, nothing to the judgment of the individual. This setting of the stage, this tortuous preparation of the individual, this methodical training, required work and also time.

Allied forces had given the Germans as little opportunity as possible for perfecting their arrangements. From the Lys sector, on the north, to the Champagne front, several sudden thrusts had been made at the German lines, at least one of which, west of the Oise, gained considerable ground early in June, where the Germans were stopt short in their attempt to hew a way through to Compiègne. The ground taken was important from a defensive standpoint, since it cut down the area in which the Germans had to maneuver in this part of the battle-area. Joffre in 1914 had been the originator of this "nibbling" policy, but he had applied it only to static trench-warfare and back in 1915 and 1916 the average "nibble" was a very modest affair. War bulletins in those times told of gains of fifty yards, or seventy-five yards, or a hundred yards. That old, inelastic warfare of position had

now been replaced by semi-open warfare in which "nibbles" had become more sizable. A local drive now looked like a failure unless it yielded a gain of at least half a mile. Foch's nibbling was the nibbling of a war of movement, in which he continued to strike at supposedly weak points.

As a matter of fact, Foch was testing the German line for soft spots and he found so many that, with the arrival in France in May and June of more than 400,000 Americans, he was able to launch his great offensive of July 18. So well did Foch's generals, among whom Pétain was chief of the French armies in the field, just as Haig was chief of the British armies in the field, come to understand conditions in the German line and so much had Pershing advocated a counter-offensive that as early as July 6 French artillery had begun to make their counter preparations and had sprayed the German lines in the Champagne with gas-shells. Foch was in fact so well informed in regard to the exact day when the offensive would begin that on July 15 he had started an artillery counter-attack an hour before the German bombardment set in. French fire at one point was so violent that German infantry were unable to leave their trenches until two and a half hours after the time set for them to leave.

When Ludendorff launched his attack on July 15 it embraced fifty miles, divided into two parts, one on each side of Reims, which, with neighboring heights, separated the two forces. On the first day twenty-five divisions were identified east of Reims and twenty west of it. Three French armies were guarding that front, one east of Reims under Gouraud, one south and west of Reims under Berthelot, and one commanded by Demetrey, holding the Marne from Venteuil to Fossoy, with Americans between Fossoy and Château-Thierry. Other American units were fighting under Gouraud, while detachments of British and Italians were assisting the French near the Ardre River. In this action, under Gouraud, our Forty-second Division was engaged, near Perthes, a name that recalled fierce fighting in the same place during the first year of the war. Battalions of the Forty-second broke six successive counter-attacks with steady rifle and machine-gun fire. In Gouraud's master-stroke, therefore, of stopping the Germans in Champagne, Americans had a hand of real

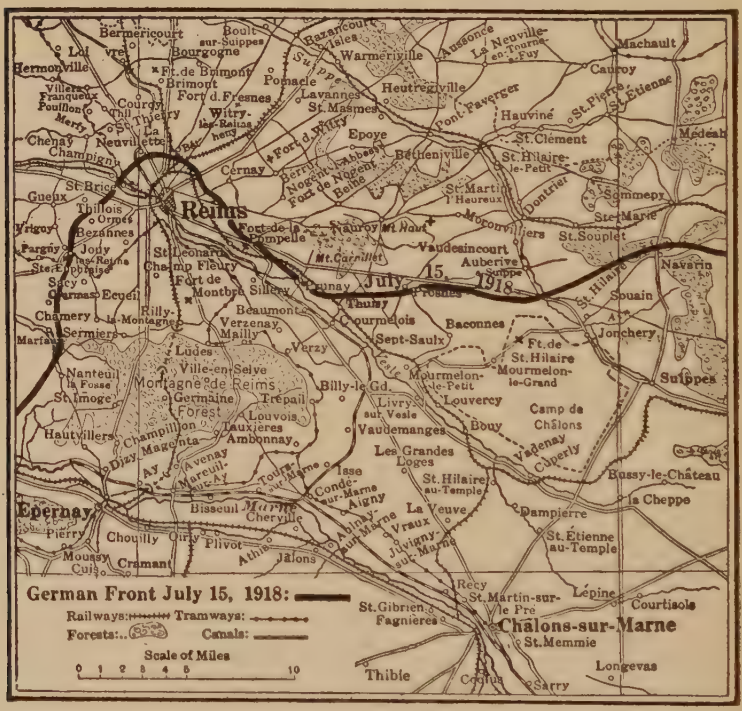
consequence. Under Gouraud were also colored troops from America, known as the Fifteenth Infantry, who, on coming home early in 1918, had a great reception in New York with a parade which became virtually a city holiday.

The German onslaught set in on July 15, in the darkness and gloom of an early morning after a tremendous night bombardment of high explosives and gas-shells. It was made with the evident intention of pinching out the Reims salient and forcing a further crossing of the Marne from Château-Thierry eastward and so get to Châlons. Fierce battles set in on both sides of Reims, which city, since the last offensive along the Marne, had stood as the apex of a sharp salient. West of Reims the unleashing was preceded by a veritable hail of high explosives and gas-shells which enabled Germans to cross the Marne at several places, but east of the city they were held up. Altogether the two battle-fronts aggregated about sixty-five miles. An hour after midnight of the 14th the whole countryside had been lighted with the flare of thousands of cannon. Not only did the enemy heavily bombard the front line, but by using a new long-range gun, shelled points twenty, twenty-five and even thirty miles beyond the line, a few shells reaching as far as Meaux.

That something exceptional was happening on the front was obvious in Paris that day. Sounds of a tremendously heavy bombardment became audible in every part of the city and in suburbs for fifty miles around. Its violence could be gathered from the fact that a majority of the people believed the noise came from the barrage fire of anti-aircraft guns within the city, but the more thoughtful ones wondered why no alarm had been given. When people rose from their beds they saw the northeastern horizon aglow with a pale, flame-colored light. Hundreds climbed the slopes of Montmartre and there could see the flashing of far-off guns, and yet next day the Paris morning papers breathed not a syllable of news.

German strategy had sought to reproduce in full measure the conditions which existed at the moment when the first battle of the Marne began. It sought to establish its flank all the way from the Massiges westward to Château-Thierry. These larger purposes were foiled in the first days of the battle when, between Reims and the Argonne, the French

under Gouraud stopt a tremendous attack, the French line not pierced, not even bent. Gouraud's troops had retired, voluntarily, a certain distance to prepared positions, and against those positions the German storm had broken with fury and had failed. At the end of the second day the German attack between Reims and the Argonne came to a standstill. It had achieved no greater gains than occupation of the Moronvilliers Heights, relinquished by the French in the first hours of the battle, and a few positions on the eastern side of the Reims salient, which were important only if progress on the west side should menace the salient itself.




WHERE GOURAUD HELD UP THE GERMANS

About fifteen miles east of Reims are shown Moronvilliers Heights, from which Gouraud retired in order to hold up the Germans on a stronger line south. The German objective was Châlons, but they got no further south than Prunay. Simultaneously, their drive west of Reims was checked on the Marne at Château-Thierry.

The great attack had in fact been definitely held up on the whole front east of Reims five hours after it was launched. On the front west of Reims the Germans had for a time rather more success, but their only important gain for a morning's work was the crossing of the Marne and the taking of a zone a few miles deep on a front of about ten miles, eastward from Château-Thierry. Nowhere did the attack gain the sweeping success which had attended other German efforts since March 21. Entente military experts became almost optimistic, altho the danger was not over.

GENERAL GOURAUD

Gouraud commanded east of Reims, a division of Americans cooperating under him

While the thrust did not succeed anywhere in gaining more than three miles, it was most successfully held up east of Reims. This was partly due to the maneuver by Gouraud, who had allowed the Germans to expend their fury on practically empty spaces, so that when they attempted to proceed beyond those spaces they were taken under a furious fire and cut to pieces. Here the Franco-Americans did not lose a gun, which showed how successfully, in the Champagne sector, in fact for the entire distance from Reims to the Massiges, the Germans had been unable to make any real headway. From the very outset they were defeated, and the fighting gradually died away as far as Prunay. It was chiefly due to airmen that the French had become aware beforehand of exactly where the blow would be struck and approximately on what day. As soon as the offensive actually began, the airmen supplied information as to the points at which the enemy was trying to cross the Marne and did this in spite of clouds of smoke with which the Germans tried to conceal their movements. In stirring phrases im-

ploring his men to stand firm, Gouraud had issued an order that soon became famous throughout France and elsewhere:

"We may be attacked at any moment. You all feel that a defensive battle never has been engaged in under more favorable conditions. You have been warned and are on guard with powerful reinforcements of infantry and artillery. You will fight on the ground you have transformed by your hard work into redoubtable fortresses, which are invincible if the passages are properly guarded. The bombardment will be terrible, but you will stand it without weakening. The assault will be violent, in clouds of smoke, dust and gas, but your position and armament are formidable. In your breasts beat free men's brave, strong hearts. Nobody will look behind nor recede a step. Each of you will have one thought—to kill, and to kill many until they cry 'Enough!' For this reason your General says you will break this assault, and it will be broken gloriously."

Gouraud knew this attack was to be the maximum German effort. About one hour before ten o'clock on the night of July 14 he had captured German prisoners who told his men when the attack would come—how the artillery preparation was to start at midnight and continue for five hours and twenty-five minutes. Gouraud, however, had started his artillery-fire five minutes ahead of theirs, and then had sent back for all the soldiers that could be spared from other points to reinforce his line, into which Colonel William Hayward's Fifteenth Infantry, New York's "Black Watch," had been brigaded. Gouraud took his own troops out of front-line trenches over a front of fifty kilometers, abandoning them only when sure as to where the German attack would come. He now had the Fifteenth New York at one end of that 50-kilometer line and the old Sixty-ninth New York, of the "Rainbow Division," at the other. Of Colonel Hayward's 1,600 men, only 16 volunteers were left in specially reinforced trenches with signal rockets, gas-shell, and a few machine-guns. Promptly at midnight the Germans started their barrage and for 5 hours and 25 minutes their shells fell in empty trenches, except for the patrols, who had stayed there expecting to be killed.

Gouraud was one of the younger men whom Joffre had selected in the early part of the war for important commands. While holding a sector in the Argonne Forest in

1914 he had earned the title of "the lion of the Argonne." In 1915 he had command of the French Expeditionary Force in the Gallipoli campaign, in which he lost an arm and was badly wounded in the right thigh. Berthelot, who served west of Gouraud, had commanded the French Mission in Roumania in the autumn of 1916 and had been spoken of in *Le Figaro* as "the glorious victor of the Labyrinth and Le Mort Homme, whom we love as a national hero." Berthelot was well known to officers of the United States Army. He visited Washington in June, 1917, when Balfour, Viviani and Joffre were there. His coming here to confer with our military leaders was regarded at that time as a special mark of honor. Berthelot stayed longer than Joffre, in fact he had left Washington only three weeks before this battle around Reims began, having been recalled.

American troops were now to face their first cavalry charge. They wiped out a formidable force of German horsemen east of Reims. Immediately afterward the same American unit broke up a combined attack of infantry and tanks. They held an important sector on a slight rise, behind a chalk-colored hill, over which were enemy front positions. When the German cavalry topped the hill and swept down on the other side, they ran into an American unit with a record for sharp-shooting. Opening up with machine-guns, automatic rifles and Enfields, the Americans quickly "dropt" the Germans, both men and horses. Artillery joined in, adding to the slaughter, until the cavalry dwindled to a handful and galloped back over the hill into the German line. When the Germans reorganized for another attack, American observers spotted German tanks crawling over the hill accompanied by infantry. Artillery squarely struck several tanks, splitting them wide open. Simultaneously German infantry began to melt away under this fire of American infantry and machine-gunners. This German effort was broken up almost as quickly as the previous one had been, and the Germans made no further attempt there. Reinforced by French infantry, the Americans then attacked the Germans, driving them back beyond their original lines.

When the Germans fell into the trap which Gouraud laid for them, entire ranks crumpled up like paper, completely

deceived by the stratagem. It is a tradition of the German army that the Guard is never allowed to retire until it has at least reached enemy trenches, and so the Guard was here ordered to advance again, but, against all precedent in Prussian military history, the Guard refused to attack. It had been more than decimated, its morale overcome by the terrific fire of French guns. Gouraud asked that the Cross of the Legion of Honor be awarded to the sixty survivors of a little band of volunteers whose self-sacrifice in remaining in machine-gun posts when the rest of his army fell back had rendered the Champagne victory possible.

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COL. WILLIAM HAYWARD
Commander of the old 15th (colored) Regiment, who served under General Gouraud east of Reims

Westward of Reims and between that city and Château-Thierry the Germans attacking American forces south of the Marne between Château-Thierry and Jaulgonne, temporarily forced a passage and drove our troops backward, but by a brilliant offensive the Americans reestablished their lines and drove the Germans across the river again — inflicting heavy losses and achieving what was, up to that moment, their most brilliant success in the war. The French, between Jaulgonne and Dormans, fared less well. Here on a front of some twelve miles, the Germans successfully passed the Marne, mounted the hills on the southern side of the valley, and temporarily established themselves as securely as had the Austrians at Montello in northern Italy in the opening phase of the battle of the Piave in the previous October. Having done this, the Germans turned their attention eastward, and advancing up

the Marne on either bank, struck boldly and heavily for Epernay with the obvious purpose of enveloping the French troops in the Reims salient and abolishing this obstacle to an attack on Paris. The position of the French and their few Italian comrades at one point in the Reims salient had become difficult if not desperate on July 17. On either bank of the Marne the Germans were not more than eight miles west of Epernay. Northward they were climbing the westward slope of the Montagne de Reims, which was the military element in the Reims position. It was now clear that, unless a speedy change was effected in the situation by a counter-attack, either about Reims or elsewhere, the cathedral city would fall and the French would be obliged to retire behind the Marne, giving that salient over into German hands after it had practically stopt a German push toward Paris.

At midnight of July 14 the German creeping barrage near Château-Thierry had gone five miles beyond the southern bank of the Marne. Successive curtains of steel had been thrown at short intervals for several hours. Back and forth from front to rear the curtains moved. While the firing was at its height, and after the Germans had tried several times unsuccessfully to put pontoon bridges across the river and were thwarted by fire, they brought to the northern bank of the Marne canvas boats numbering on the American front about 200, and protected by a heavy bombardment and so carried over a crack guard division, with twenty men in each boat, and by 7 o'clock landed along the river a force estimated at 15,000. Germans taken prisoners said they had been long trained for this crossing. After they had passed over on the bridges they went into action with a large number of machine-guns and in the face of superior numbers the Americans who met them fell back.

Withdrawing from front trenches, north of a railroad-track, the Americans waited until the attackers were very close, and then opened a direct and flanking rifle-fire until the Germans became demoralized and retired in disorder. The Americans in this counter-attack advanced their lines 750 yards. American field-guns, firing low over the heads of men in advanced positions, tore great gaps in the close-packed German ranks, withholding their fire until they could

literally follow a military order, famous in our history: "Don't fire until you can see the whites of their eyes." At a signal, they cut loose with such a tornado of steel that the foremost waves of German infantry were torn to shreds, wavered, tried to reform their ranks, and finally fled, leaving the field carpeted with gray bodies. Time and again the Germans returned to the attack, doggedly trying to sweep over the American front lines and carry the elevation which formed for the Americans their support position, and time and again their waves broke and receded "like the waves of the sea battering a rock-bound coast." The Americans brought trench-mortars into play, the ranges at times so short that heavy projectiles cut through a score of men before exploding. One mortar-gun outfit, operating in gas-masks for six hours, wiped out five German battalions, probably 2,500 men. Some of the German assaults were carried into the American lines until bayonets, rifles, clubs, and fists had to be substituted for bullets. The fighting was almost continuous throughout the day.

Toward evening the Germans, thoroughly beaten for the time being, called off their infantry and settled down to an artillery duel that was a battle of some magnitude in itself. After many hours, Americans in a counter-attack threw Germans back across the Marne southwest of Jaulgonne until there were no longer any Germans on the Marne in front of our troops. Many Germans were drowned in the swollen stream. The Americans in this counter-attack disregarded the superior French command. All that became publicly known at the time about the authorship of the following message, sent to the French command in the afternoon, was that it had been written by "an American general in command of the American forces south of the Marne":

"We regret being unable on this occasion to follow the counsels of our masters, the French, but the American flag has been forced to retire. This is unendurable and none of our soldiers would understand their not being asked to do whatever is necessary to repair a situation which is humiliating to us, and unacceptable to our country's honor. We are going to counter-attack."

The American troops that had thus counter-attacked, re-

covered lost ground, and a half mile in addition, altho advised by the French that the ground was of no great strategic value and the German effort could be left to spend itself. The above courteous message to a superior command, gently rejecting counsel, but politely explaining the reason why, promised to become one of the documents of the war that would get into American school histories. In a small way this was the first act in the great Franco-American counter-offensive that was launched on the western arm of the Marne salient by Foch three days later. Pershing in his report on the American operations in the war referred to a regiment that, while near Château-Thierry, "wrote one of the most brilliant pages in our military history." Later it was learned that this regiment was in the Third Division and was the Thirty-eighth Infantry, Regulars, commanded by Colonel Ulysses G. McAlexander, with Colonel Frank H. Adams second in command. Together with the Thirtieth Infantry and the Ninth Machine-Gun Battalion, it constituted the Sixth Infantry Brigade under command of Colonel Charles Crawford.

The division was commanded by Gen. Joseph T. Dickman. The brigade in this battle was holding ground on each side of the Surmelin River, which flows north into the Marne between two high wooded table-lands. These upland wooded areas were German objectives, because their possession would have made easy the capture of country for miles to the south and would have outflanked our troops toward Château-Thierry five miles west. Under cover of darkness the Germans had crossed the Marne in front of the Thirtieth Infantry, holding the left of the brigade in line, where this regiment had a wide area to defend, and also to the right of the Thirty-eighth Infantry, and so had overwhelmed outposts along the bank. When daylight came, the Thirty-eighth Infantry found Germans on three sides of them trying to organize their troops for a general advance according to a prearranged plan. So heavy was the fire of all kinds, including artillery, and so desperate were the close attacks made upon them by the Thirty-eighth Infantry, that about 7.30 o'clock in the morning all the Germans who had not been killed in front of the Thirtieth Infantry and in front

and to the left of the Thirtieth Infantry, surrendered. The Thirtieth Infantry sent back about 175 prisoners and the Thirty-eighth accounted for nearly 500.[1]

It was about 10 o'clock at night when the last German on the south of that part of the Marne was accounted for. We had 600 prisoners and the bank was lined with German dead. It was estimated that the Americans had killed or wounded 6,000. It was the bloodiest and most important action in which American soldiers had yet been engaged. Caught in the German fire from three sides, they had stayed where put until forced back by overwhelming odds, and then, instead of quitting, got some of their French comrades to help put the Germans across the Marne.[2]

The attack on the eastern sector which extended over twenty-five miles east of Reims to Rouvois near the foothills of the Argonne, resulted in the Germans advancing about a mile and a half at three points, capturing Drunay and Prosnée and making gains along the Souvain road, but at all other places their advance was checked. American troops were participating in the battle at that point. Against our troops, brigaded with French units in great part, the German High Command was hurling a considerable portion of their remaining reserves which hitherto had not been used in hammer smashes. Ludendorff was believed to possess in this entire area 680,000 men, to be used there exclusively unless he failed to gain an initial success, when they were to be shifted elsewhere..

The offensive had been planned on a scale almost equal to that launched on March 21. Prisoners said they had expected an easy victory, officers having told them they would be opposed by troops in no great numbers, completely demoralized. Seldom before had the German losses been proportionately so high. In the region of Prunay they were estimated as 65 per cent. of the effectives engaged. The Kaiser's best troops were thrown into the struggle. The results of their efforts were still meager on the second day in comparison with their stated objectives. They had paid a

[1] Statement made in December, 1918, by Col. Charles Crawford in a hospital, Williamsbridge, New York, as reported in The New York *Times*.

[2] Cable dispatch from Edwin L. James to The *Times* (New York).

heavy price for what little they gained. Southwest of Reims toward Château-Thierry, where, apparently they attempted to deal their severest stroke in the hope of reaching Epernay, they got forward to St. Agnan, La Chapelle, and Monthodon, about four miles south of the Marne in the region east of the successful counter-attack by American troops.

Five bridges west of Dormans were destroyed on July 16 by Allied aviators and artillery, despite a mist and smoke clouds with which the Germans sought to hide their passage over the Marne. French airmen had from the beginning carried out with striking success their work of scouting. Fighting- and bombing-planes took an important part in the battle; one bombing group sent out two expeditions of over 100 machines each. Fourteen tons of explosives were dropt in one day on German lines of communication north of the Marne. Forty-one enemy-planes were brought down and three balloons destroyed. One squadron of chasers by machine-gun fire completely stopt a large body of German troops from getting over one of the bridges.[3]

Men who had seen fighting throughout the war said there never was anything like the German artillery preparation for this drive. Areas one, two, and even three miles back of the lines had often before been heavily shelled out, but now the Germans shelled front lines and back lines, shelled five, ten, twenty, and even thirty miles back in the Meaux district. This performance was repeated all along the front. The Germans had perfected a new long-range cannon which, while not of the same range as the gun which had bombarded Paris, was still of greater range than other guns hitherto used in a battle. On the first day the fighting was of such vigorous nature that, after being engaged only a few hours, more than one German division had to be withdrawn, east and west of Reims, which according to the German schedule was to have been taken within an hour, after which the Germans were to push on to Montmirail and the railroad to Châlons, which was to have been captured on the third day. The map showed how far short they had fallen.

The German official statement was a tacit admission of failure when it said: "To the southwest and east of Reims

[3] Cable dispatch from G. H. Perris to The *Times* (New York).

we penetrated into parts of the French positions." The eloquence of this statement was its reserve of silence and its failure to mention the heavy opposition encountered just east of Château-Thierry, where the Americans, counter-attacking after the Germans had crossed the river, captured several hundred prisoners, including a complete brigade staff. Nor did the German statement mention the slaughter inflicted upon them as they crossed the Marne, where in droves they marched into the muzzles of French and American machine- and field-guns and were annihilated.

Thrown back across the Marne, the Germans did not renew their infantry assaults next day. In counter-attacks they were caught in a cyclonic rush and great numbers of them were hurled bodily into the river. Gunners firing from far in the rear dropt shells on pontoons with the greatest accuracy. When they reached the river and were compelled to plunge in, many were drowned. Others were caught in the rain of shells and machine-gun bullets and the stream was soon thickly dotted with shattered bodies. For ten hours the intense shelling was continued by guns of all calibers. Everything within 40 kilometers (25 miles) of the front was shelled, while front lines and organizations immediately in the rear were subjected to a fierce deluge of gas-shells and high explosives.

Of itself the Reims salient was not of vital importance. Reims was a ruin. There was nothing of military value within the salient, and a shortening and straightening of the line would have taken the French out of a dangerous and difficult position. On the other hand, the Germans would have been in a far better situation to resume their main thrust. More and more plainly it was seen that the supreme purpose of the Germans was to deliver the final battle for "world-power or downfall" on the plains between the Oise and the Marne, where Kluck had been checked and thrown back almost four years before. The period of anxious waiting was not over, but we were still gaining time and numbers, while the Germans were consuming time and losing numbers. It was too soon to jubilate unreservedly over the news, but there was reason for pride and thankfulness in the showing made by American troops. That our regiments

should have been able, not only to maintain themselves at one point, but to drive back the enemy was tribute to their stedfastness and valor as well as to their training. They had refused to be beaten back and had robbed the Germans of a good deal of initial success. The extreme points reached by the Germans south of the river were St. Agnan and La Chapelle-Monthodon on the road which runs on to Condé. The Kaiser himself had come up to witness a victory in this

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AMERICAN SOLDIERS RESTING AFTER BEING RELIEVED

battle. Writing from the battlefield northeast of Reims on July 17, Karl Rosner reported:

"The Kaiser, who desired to participate in the battle from its very beginning, in the midst of his fighting troops, went on the night of July 14 to the region of the impending fighting and spent the night in an advanced observation-post. There he listened to the terrible music of our surprize fire-attack and watched the unparalleled picture of projectiles raging over the enemy positions. A few minutes after our bombardment, which burst forth at 4.50 A.M., he had in his hands the first reports of the good progress made. From then

on till nightfall, denying himself even a moment's rest, he remained with his troops, and again all day to-day he stopt on the battlefield, facing the contested ground."

Château-Thierry promised forever to hold a place in American history, marking as it did a region where American troops twice had stopt the Germans just when their "peace drive" took them nearest Paris, and darkened their hopes. Château-Thierry, after the Germans fled, was an uncanny place. But for an occasional shell and the droning of airplanes overhead, absolute quiet ruled among deserted and ruined buildings. Thousands of shells had put their marks on the little city. Not a living being was in sight. The Rue Carnot was paved with a three-foot deep carpet of débris, with barricade after barricade raised fifteen feet high, and often two to every block, little forts from behind which machine-guns and rifles had spit venom for several weeks. The station was an empty shell, the tracks torn up. Shop after shop was strewn with wreckage, the Germans having pillaged and destroyed what could do them no possible good. A pretty little café showed an inside filled with broken and empty bottles, the only bottle not emptied being filled with ammonia. Next to it was a children's store, with little shoes and baby finery in rank profusion, ruined beyond repair. The proud old cathedral, with one tower missing and scores of shell-holes through its sides, still maintained something of its dignity.

Residential districts, on the outskirts of the city, were in much better shape. Here perhaps threescore persons had stayed through all the hell that raged there, among them Madame DePrey, 87 years old, who for weeks had cared for German wounded. The magnificent stone bridge over the Marne had been blown up for almost its entire length. The center of the town was pretty well wrecked, but more than half the city was inhabitable. Most of the damage done was south of the Marne, because the Germans shelled the Franco-American troops there so heavily, while districts north of the river fared not so badly, because the French respected their own city. Foch had forced an evacuation by strategy, thus avoiding further destruction of an historic place dating back to the eighth century. Surprizingly few German dead were

found, the few being in cellars.[4] One of the last refugees from the city reported that LaFontaine's house had been blown to pieces. LaFontaine's statue, however, still stood "untouched at the entrance to the city, unmarked, bold, defiant." The castle built by Charles Martel was in ruins, as were a fifteenth-century church and the hôtel de ville.

Château-Thierry had been in German possession for some weeks, and Germans imagined it was going to remain in their possession much longer. Much shameful destruction that took place in it was perpetrated at the eleventh hour when the Germans learned, much to their surprize, that they were going to be defeated. In the larger houses and mansions there was nothing that they had not destroyed. Tapestries had been hacked to pieces, pictures slit from corner to corner, leather and other chair-coverings ripped from their frames, all the delicate marqueterie and irreplaceable examples of the craftsmanship of past centuries smashed. Legs had been torn off tables and used in further work of destruction. There was not a mirror which had not been broken and the china flung at them lay in fragments at their feet. Statues and statuettes in marble and ivory had been dismembered with hammers. A pickax had been used to destroy a wonderful grand piano which had cost some hundreds of pounds. In true German fashion this vengeful fury was carried even to the extent of smashing nurseries and dolls' houses. Dolls had been trampled on and torn to pieces, a rocking-horse cleft with an ax, cradles flung out of windows, drawers and cupboards ransacked and their contents ripped up, burned or besmirched in a manner suggestive of lunatics. After the Germans were driven out of the city, an American flag was hoisted from the city hall. Six months after the battle visitors to Chateau-Thierry found it still floating there. In the face of the clock on the city hall was a hole made by Germans for a machine-gun.

Americans soon felt that it would be graceful and fitting after the war, if our people were to take upon themselves the task of rebuilding Château-Thierry. "Ah, the Americans! They are fine boys," said an aged councilman of the city who had refused to leave when the Germans came. "When

[4] Cable dispatch from Edwin L. James to The *Times* (New York).

we rebuild our city it will always be a home for Americans. We shall be proud to make them welcome." In a true sense Château-Thierry was, and promised to remain, American, a new national shrine, another Bunker Hill. It was at Château-Thierry that American troops won their first notable victory in Europe. Here they threw themselves against oncoming German forces and helped to blockade the road to Paris, an advance guard from across the seas coming into serious clash with the trained hosts of despotism. Inexperienced tho they were, they proved themselves more than a match for the best that German militarism had produced. At Château-Thierry Americans, unbidden by Foch, had really started the great counter-offensive. When momentarily driven south by the sudden German onrush, they, on their own responsibility, had turned upon the enemy and hurled him back across the river.

Northwest and north of Château-Thierry in places that had been villages—Belleau, Torcy, Bouresches—the heavy hand of war had wiped away all semblance of habitable places and left desolate and dusty ruins of stone and mortar. Villages that sheltered each 500 to 1,000 souls were piles of débris. Dead Germans could be seen in profusion, lying where they fell. There were also to be seen bodies of Americans who had died to save France and civilization from those Germans. Every other tree had been cut off by shell-fire. Not a square foot of ground but bore marks of fighting. German machine-guns in cleverly concealed nests stood with the bodies of Boches lying across them just where they had fallen. Here could be seen the remains of a kitchen which had furnished its last meal; or a ruined dugout through the wrecked door of which one saw German bodies lying where a 75-mm. shell had got them while sleeping; or a box of unused hand-grenades; or a pile of ammunition which had never killed Americans; or a cache of delaying food. Here, there, and everywhere, was carnage in profusion. In a trench which the Germans had tried to hold there were German dead so thick that they lay one upon another in ghastly array.

Many German divisions lost 50 per cent. of their effectives. In the river and on the road from Château-Thierry to Epernay, and on the heights of Jaulgonne, Barzy, and Passy,

where American troops had been operating, German dead were lying all over the road where they had been mown down in closely packed groups during their retreat. These masses gave the lie to German claims that the retreat across the river northward had been effected "tranquilly." It was a mad, headlong flight. The Germans ran at the top of their speed, and, as foot-bridges were lacking, many of them, in order to escape the murderous fire of cannon and machine-guns, threw themselves into the river in the hope of escaping by swimming and were drowned in shoals.[5]

Having broken the force of the German offensive east and west of Reims, Foch determined to relieve the situation on the Marne by a great counter-attack against the western face of the salient between the Aisne and the Marne, under command of Mangin and Degoutte. Americans were to fight with the French in both armies. Mangin had first come prominently to the front when he planned the operation which led to the recovery of Fort Douaumont, after the Germans abandoned their attack on Verdun in 1916, and subsequently took a leading part in the attack on the Chemin-des-Dames in April, 1917. He had been selected by Foch to command the French army on the Montdidier-Noyon front when Hutier launched his first offensive on June 9, and was known as one of the best tactical leaders in France. Degoutte was much less known, even in France, when given command of the Franco-American army operating northwest of Château-Thierry.[5]

[5] Principal Sources: William L. McPherson in The *Tribune* (New York), *The Fortnightly Review* (London), The *Sun*, The *Tribune*, New York; Associated Press dispatches.

## II

## THE SECOND BATTLE OF THE MARNE IN WHICH AMERICANS COMPRISE THIRTY PER CENT. OF THE ENTENTE FORCE

### July 18, 1918—July 25, 1918

BY the evening of July 17, the third day of the fifth German offensive, Ludendorff's onslaught had been completely checked east of Reims and substantially checked at points between Reims and Château-Thierry—that is, except for a narrow area on either side of the Marne east of Château-Thierry, and even here the lines were tending to stabilize themselves. The full fury of the German blow had exhausted itself without piercing the French line, or producing any collapse. The whole situation, as Foch saw it, had become so extremely favorable to the Allies that he felt in a position to launch his long-waited-for counter-offensive, being satisfied as to the inherent weakness of the German position in the salient. Engaged as they had been to the uttermost in bitter fighting, the Germans had grown weary and their food was beginning to run short. A moment had arrived that must have recalled to Foch that crisis of 1914 in the first battle of the Marne, when under Joffre, he launched his thrust at La Fère Champenoise and decided the issue of the great battle.

Colonel Frederick Palmer, who had been on Pershing's staff since Pershing sailed for France in the summer of 1917, outlined,[6] late in the following year, Pershing's share in Foch's plans for breaking the German offensive. The Allied armies on the Western Front had been for four months on the defensive when, early in July, Ludendorff's fourth offensive had brought him within forty miles of Paris. So serious had the situation become that there were military discussions as to whether or not Paris could be defended should another drive bring Paris within range of heavy

[6] "America in France" (Dodd, Mead & Co.)

SECOND BATTLE OF THE MARNE
Battle Line July 18th shown thus:
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5 10
Autrèches
Laffaux
Terny-Sorny
Jouy
Hurtebise Fm
Corbeny
Neufchâtel
Attichy
R. Aisne
Fontenoy
Vregny
Soissons
Ft. Condé
Vailly
Chavonne
Paissy
Berry au Bac
Pont Arcy
Aisne-Marne Canal
Cormicy
Amblény
Fosse en haut
Laversine
Cœuvres
Cutry
Mont-de Paris
Venizel
Sermoise
Longueval
Merval
Cauroy
Brimont
Loivre
Dommiers
Mortefontaine
St. Pierre Aigle
Ploisy
Chaudun
Berzy-le Sec
Bruisne
Courcelles
Paars
Fismette
Bazoches
St. Thierry
Montgobert
Vierzy
Ruzancy
Villemontoire
Tigny
Taux
Fismes
Magneux
Jonchery
la Neuvillette
Béthény
Villiers-Cotterets
Chavigny Fm.
Hartennes
Villers-Helon
Champigny
Cernay
Beine
Nauroy
Moronvilliers
Cercy
Savage Fm
Buisson
St. Remy-Blanzy
Arcis le Ponsart
Faverolles
Vrigny
Ste Euphraise
Reims
Mon. du Garde
Faverolles
Trécnes
de Chesnes
Noroy
Rozet-St. Albin
Oulchy-le Château
Fère en Tardenois
Sarcy
Bouilly
Courmas
Ft Pompelle
Prunay
ROMAN ROAD
Prosnes
Le Ferté Milon
Neuilly-St. Front
Armentières
Sergy
Bligny
Chaumuzy
Marfaux
Pourcy
Beaumont-sur Vesle
Passy-en Valois
la Croix
Coincy
Courtmont
Boujacourt
Champlat
B. de Courton
Verzy
Priez
Rocourt
Bercy
Grisolles
Châtelet
Courpoil
Oizy-et Violaine
Cuchery
la Poterie
Belval
Villers-Marmery
Chézy
Hautevesnes
Courchamps
Pas-Grigny
Baslieux
Livry
Lucy-Clignon
Bézu-St. Germain
Jaulgonne
Châtillon
Roucy
Crouy-sur Ourcq
Bassiare
Givry
Torcy
Belleau Wood
Etrépilly
Chartèves
Mont-St. Père
Vincelles
Chassins
Treloup
Dormans
Bouguigny
Venteuil
Avenay
Bourg
Vaux
Brasles
Passy
Vassy
Cuilly
Montvoisin
Lizy-s. Ourcq
Fosso
Reuilly
Courthiézy
Chêne-la Reine
Épernay
Hill 204
Essômes
la Chapelle-Monthodon
Ft. Epernay
Montreuil-aux Lions
Azy
St. Agnan
Forêt
Ste Martin
Château Thierry
Condé en Brie
Enghuien
Blois
Avize
Chézy sur Marne
R. Marne
Surmelin R.
Nogent-l'Artaud
TO PARIS
Châlons sur Marne
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

German guns. Hopes of preventing this mainly centered on the coming of American troops, for if the Allies could hold back the Germans until August 1, the American additions to Foch's reserves would enable the Entente to outnumber the Germans. Once the Americans were organized it had been thought Foch would consider an offensive—but not until then—which perhaps meant not before the spring of 1919.

Pershing was now deep in the councils of Foch. Reflecting on what his troops had done at Cantigny and Château-Thierry, and especially the spirit of initiative they had shown, he began to believe that an offensive might be undertaken now without waiting for spring, and this opinion had some real influence in bringing Foch to decide on the operation of July 18 as an effort to recover the offensive in 1918 in a single stroke. Reports of so-called German strength had not diverted Pershing's attention from the inviting bulge in the German battle-line below Soissons. As early as June 22, when Clemenceau and Foch were at Pershing's headquarters for a conference, he had pointed to its vulnerability and advocated an offensive, having faith that the German strength had been overestimated; and that under a determined attack the salient would break. Pershing said he had divisions in rest which could be mobilized and other untrained divisions which could be employed to release French divisions from quiet sectors. Our older divisions meanwhile had proved their mettle and we had others now fully trained who would fight, while behind were other divisions rapidly training and still others were arriving from America.

Colonel Palmer noted how the result of the German offensive of July 15 had enforced Pershing's conclusion, both in the repulse given to the enemy by Gouraud east of Reims and by the Franco-Americans east of Château-Thierry, and the way in which the American Third and Fourth Divisions and French and British divisions had fought. All the Germans had gained was to deepen their pockets, to put the point of their salient over the Marne in a bloody and unsuccessful effort to do more. They had reached a state of reaction as the result of failure which meant a "turning-point in the war's psychology." It was in these conditions that Foch decided to accept the German challenge, knowing

the Germans were confused by the failure of their initiative. As to the honors, Colonel Palmer remarks that Foch "gave the word for the attack," Pétain "worked out the plans," and both "had taken Pershing at his word." With Americans back of him ready to come forward in many thousands, with other Americans fighting at his side, Foch no longer needed caution in safeguarding his reserves. Pershing had brought to him "numbers and the impulse of youth." Foch had heard of our "pantherish rush," and was ready to give another example of French *élan*, and so "in the second Marne offensive," said Colonel Palmer, "the gleam that was in Foch's eyes in the first Marne offensive came back." The rivalry that now rose between the French and American divisions gave a spur to the effort made on July 18, toward Soissons, which became "as brilliant in execution as it was in conception."

The thrust began with attacks by Mangin and Degoutte against the German right flank, the noble stand made several days earlier by Gouraud's army in the Champagne having made success really possible. If Gouraud at that time had seriously fallen back, not only would Châlons and Epernay almost certainly have been lost, but Verdun and Reims would have been so enveloped that their evacuation must have followed. But Gouraud had held fast, and that was the beginning of the enemy's downfall. Combined with Gouraud's success was the stand made by the Franco-Americans at the same time east of Château-Thierry, including the Surmelin River stroke by the famous regiment. Before that Germans, out of an arrogant and grandiose belief in their strength and their contempt for the French, had themselves taken a step which helped in their undoing. Their offensive south of the Aisne had proved so much more successful than they had hoped, in consequence of the French being taken by surprize, that they had determined off-hand to exploit the advance by pushing to and beyond the Marne. Some of their own military authorities had pointed out the danger they would incur from a flank attack by Foch, but the German high command was so convinced of the feebleness of the "bled white" French and so incredulous as to what the Americans could do, that they ignored the risk and pushed

on. From that decision came the opportunity for which Foch had been so long waiting. Weaker commanders might have been alarmed by the German effort, in which event their natural course would have been to concentrate their available effectives behind the Marne. Not so with Foch and Pétain.

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INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL AT MEAUX

The occasion is the second anniversary of the Battle of the Marne

On July 15 Degoutte's position extended from Faverolles, sixteen miles northwest of Château-Thierry, to Dormans, eleven miles east of that city. When, therefore, he received orders from Foch to join Mangin in a western flank attack while occupied in stopping the Germans from advancing on the Marne, his line was shortened so that part of it had to be taken over by Demetrey. On the 18th Mangin counter-

attacked with all his available troops, and from that moment the initiative in this war passed definitely from Ludendorff to Foch and Ludendorff never recovered it. In fact, three months afterward he was "down and out."

Degoutte carried out his part of the work by defending positions west of Château-Thierry. To do this he squeezed up several divisions to fill a hole, made vacant by sending forces to aid the British behind Armentières, using Americans who had been in reserve close by, and massed on the left as much of his artillery as he could spare and 150 tanks. The advance, working from southwest to northeast, went well from the first. So great was the superiority of the attack that the Germans had to call up and throw in front of Degoutte fifteen of their divisions, four of which probably had been sent forward by Crown Prince Rupprecht, who altogether had lent about twenty divisions in three months for use in the Aisne-Marne salient. It was said that on the evening of July 17, when Foch issued final orders for the great effort next day, he laid all work aside and told his staff he wished, if possible, to be left undisturbed for an hour or so. They naturally thought he felt the need of rest. An hour later a telegram required his immediate attention. Sought for, he was found alone in a little chapel kneeling in prayer.[7]

From a seat in an automobile, on July 18, an American correspondent[8] twice surveyed the entire thirty-mile width of the Franco-American advance from Château-Thierry to Soissons. In the backyard of the great battle, so to speak, he beheld extraordinary scenes along numerous roadways up which passed the life of the attack, in food, ammunition, and human replacements, and down which rolled ambulances and trucks with Franco-American wounded, and thousands of German prisoners. With powerful glasses he could see, through clearings of various wooded tracts, details of the fighting. Shells were bursting everywhere and tiny smoke-puffs marked exploding grenades. Even the figures of sharpshooters were discernible, as they wriggled along the ground like ants to pick off German machine-gunners. Over head

[7] A. Hilliard Atteridge's "Marshal Ferdinand Foch" (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

[8] Raymond G. Carroll of The *Sun* (New York).

screamed a constant succession of big shells, shrieking onward in their mission of death. There was closest cooperation between different units. If an American unit was held up at some point immediate help was forthcoming from a neighboring unit with tanks not so hard prest. The fighting-line surged forward steadily, now rapidly, now staggeringly. It curved here and bent backward there, but the general direction was always toward the enemy. Germans went reeling back toward rear positions, or came forward to give themselves up as prisoners. As the American units were sandwiched between French forces it was difficult to identify them and to keep track of their whereabouts, but one could see them pressing ever forward with only brief pauses when encountering particularly obstinate centers of resistance. The Germans were fighting almost entirely with machine-guns and artillery, seldom using rifles.

The enemy was taken by surprize, first, because he did not believe an attack was coming, and, secondly, because it was launched without artillery preparation. At night, in a heavy rain-storm, a large number of tanks had been silently concentrated opposite the German lines. Altho the forest opposite was teeming with Allied soldiers, guns, ammunition and supplies, the Germans heard nothing. When day broke, the Allied guns were all in position, and broke upon the enemy in a fury of fire. In the whole war there had been nothing more dramatic than that scene, with French tanks, followed by Franco-American infantry, pressing upon the heels of routed Germans, while in the distance shells from Allied artillery were dropping into their disorganized ranks.[9] Foch struck between Soissons and Château-Thierry under conditions that recalled Maunoury's thrust, as aided by Gallieni's motor-bus reinforcements, eastward from Paris in September, 1914. Foch used about 70 per cent. of French and 30 per cent. of American troops, the latter in the greatest numbers that had yet appeared on the Western Front, these troops under both Mangin and Degoutte. On a twenty-eight-mile front, Mangin broke the first line of German resistance and crashed forward in gains of from six to eight miles, which

[9] Cable dispatch from Gerald Campbell to The *Times* (New York) based on an interview with General Mangin.

brought him to heights dominating Soissons and, for the moment at least, across the highway and railway connecting Soissons with Château-Thierry, which had served as the main line of communication for the Germans fighting on the Marne.

There were many differences between the first and this, the second, battle of the Marne, but there were striking likenesses. The essential maneuver in both was an Allied flank-attack on the Ourcq, and the result, in both, was a rapid retreat to the north beyond the Marne. Foch saw repeated the situation which Kluck had confronted on September 5, when his reserve corps, holding his flank on the hills west of the Ourcq, was suddenly assailed by Maunoury and driven rapidly backward. Kluck saved himself from ultimate disaster by recalling all his infantry from south of the Marne, and in succeeding days checked Maunoury and even pushed him slowly back, but, by recalling his troops from south of the Marne, he abandoned the German thrust against the French, and opened the way for the return of French forces to the offensive and the subsequent victory. As Mangin advanced he brought under artillery-fire roads and railroads essential to the existence of German forces striking toward Epernay, and by July 19 the thrust was immediately and locally successful. The menace to Reims now abolished, the prospect of any German gain from this fifth offensive had gone. The Germans had suffered a defeat at least comparable with the defeat of the Austrians on the Piave a few weeks before. Even if the Allies had made no further gains, Foch had won a victory of real importance.

July 21 marked the beginning of the fifth month since the opening of the German campaign of 1918. In that period more than 750,000 American troops had been transported across the sea, Great Britain had raised new levies, the Allied armies had become much stronger in all respects, and after a German loss of perhaps three-fourths of a million in casualties, a German victory was as far away as it was on March 20, the eve of Ludendorff's great blow. In this battle under Mangin and Degoutte more Americans fought than in any battle since Grant opened the campaign of 1864 in the Wilderness. They revealed qualities which won praise from Allied nations, and made a contribution to victory positive in itself

and a promise of far greater service afterward. On a twenty-eight-mile front from the Aisne south to the Marne were captured in one day more than twenty villages, and the Allied line was advanced to within a mile of Soissons. The extreme width of the ground retaken was about six and a half miles, in the region south of Soissons, where the attacking troops pushed east as far as the little River Grise, this operation giving them possession of high ground dominating German supply lines. Other American troops, operating to the west of Soissons, were reported to have taken 4,000 prisoners, 30 guns, and much other material. Further south the First and Second American Divisions, and the Moroccans were sent to the line on the left boundary of the Soissons salient. The Twenty-sixth, Third, and Twenty-eighth Divisions were kept on the Marne and parts of the Fourth Division were assigned to the French command near Lizy-sur-Ourcq. The Americans captured Vierzy, the most desperately defended town in the whole sector, and drove a menacing salient into the German lines that affected the whole Soissons-Château-Thierry positions. The spoils of the Second Division for the first day were 2,965 prisoners, 75 guns—nearly all the artillery of two German divisions—and hundreds of machine guns. The French advance in this region carried the assailants into the western outskirts of Chouy and Neuilly-St. Front, and from there to Belleau Wood, the average depth of the advance being about three miles. East of Reims the Allies recaptured Prunay, lost in the early stages of the German Marne offensive.

The Franco-Americans accomplished more than had the Germans in their drive on both sides of Reims. The Franco-Americans together advanced in six hours virtually twice the distance covered by the Germans in three days. More than 5,000 Germans were killed, their bodies three and four deep in close formation where they had advanced against machine-guns. According to the usual ratio between killed and total casualties, this meant more than 20,000 casualties among the Germans. The Kaiser's Tenth Guard Division came against the Americans, but few got back. One battalion was annihilated and of another only one company was left. Nowhere did the Germans stay the progress of their assailants. The blow was

aimed at territory vital to them. Its capture not only meant their forced retirement from the entire salient southeastward from Soissons, with Château-Thierry in its southern apex, but the capture of thousands of Germans, many of them the best soldiers left in the German armies. Six miles was the deepest point of penetration on the first day. At several other points distances of from four to five miles were reached. Among American airmen cooperating in the assault was Quentin Roosevelt, son of the former President, who was at first reported lost, and later known to have been killed. Next day Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, despite his grief, went to the Republican State Convention at Saratoga and made a speech in which he set forth the war aims of his country as follows:

"There must be no peace until Germany is beaten to her knees. To leave her with a strangle-hold on Russia, and, through her vassal-allies, Austria, Bulgaria, and Turkey, dominant in Central Europe and Asia Minor, would mean that she had won the war and taken a giant-stride toward world dominion. Belgium must be reinstated and reimbursed; France must receive back Alsace and Lorraine; Turkey must be driven from Europe, Armenia made free, Syrian Christians protected, and the Jews given Palestine. Italian Austria must go to Italy and Roumanian Hungary to Roumania. Moreover we must raise against the German menace the sleeping sword of the slavs of Central Europe; we must establish the great free commonwealths of the Poles, the Czecho-Slovaks and the Jugo-Slavs, and save other submerged peoples who are their neighbors. Unless we do all this, unless we stand by all our allies who have stood by us, we shall have failed in making the liberty of well-behaved, civilized peoples secure, and we shall have shown that our announcement about making the world safe for Democracy was an empty boast. These are the tasks set us as regards winning the war and ending the war."

Quentin Roosevelt was killed by a German named Greper. Two shots in the head brought him down. He was buried by Germans with full military honors. Twelve American and seven German fliers had been engaged in battle when young Roosevelt and the German drew away from the rest and engaged in a duel, in which the greater experience of the German counted. Quentin's plane fell near the village of

Chamery, near Cierges, south of Reims. He was buried in a cemetery near where he fell, and his personal effects were carefully kept to be forwarded to his father. Colonel Roosevelt in his answer to condolences extended by President Poincaré, said: "My only regret is that I am unable to fight beside my sons." A few months later Colonel Roosevelt himself died at his home in Oyster Bay. He had written a few weeks before that he and Mrs. Roosevelt did not wish to have the body of Quentin removed to this country after the war, preferring that he should "continue to lie on the spot where he fell in battle and where the foeman buried him." After the war they intended to visit the grave and have a small stone set up, "but not disturbing what had already been erected to his memory by his friends and American comrades in arms."

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QUENTIN ROOSEVELT

A few days later Joyce Kilmer fell. Kilmer was the second well-known American poet to die in the war. His death was deeply felt by *The Literary Digest*, which had a department of "Current Poetry" under his direction for a number of years previous to his departure for France. Kilmer, poet, enthusiast, and patriot, met a fate that he had gone out halfway to face. As a writer in the Brooklyn *Eagle* remarked, "The Gael's warm blood ran in his veins, the Gael's vivid imagination thrilled him, yet in what he wrote and what he did there was evidence of Saxon restraint, sanity, almost cold-

ness of purpose." His poem, "The White Ships and the Red," on the sinking of the *Lusitania,* had been widely read and much quoted before he left for France. Giving up a journalistic and literary career in New York, he enlisted as a private seventeen days after the declaration of war by the United States on Germany, and accompanied the Rainbow Division as one of the earliest American contingents that sailed for France. His promotion to a sergeantcy indicated his aptitude for the new field he had entered. Reports told how he had been in the thick of the Marne fighting from the day when Foch's offensive of July 18 began until August 1, when he received his mortal wound during Ludendorff's retreat. With the English poet, Rupert Brooke, who died on a hospital ship off the island of Scyros from blood-poisoning from an insect- bite while strolling ashore, and that other American poet, Alan Seeger, who, like Kilmer, lost his life on the soil of France, Kilmer's memory remained an inspiration as a consecration of fine talents to the highest service.

JOYCE KILMER

Alan Seeger had been among the first Americans to lose his life in one of this war's battles. One of his best-known poems, "I Have a Rendezvous with Death," curiously foreshadowed his early end. Seeger died on July 4 or 5, 1916, during the British offensive on the Somme, after having been terribly wounded by a German shell. His age was twenty-eight. Little had been heard of Seeger until early that year, when his poems were published, and later, when his diaries and letters appeared. He had achieved in a short time a popularity in America hardly second to that of Rupert

Brooke in England. On June 21, 1916, Seeger, who was in the Foreign Legion, left the Thiescourt Wood for the Somme. During the night of June 30-July 1 he left Bayonviller expecting soon to be on the firing-line. On July 4 a friend said he "saw him running forward with bayonet fixt; soon after that he disappeared. It was the last time I saw him alive." In an irresistible dash the men he was with had hurled themselves to the assault, "offering their bodies as a target." Seeger fell heavily wounded in the stomach. Comrades saw him crawl into a shell-hole for shelter, where he was found dead afterward. Thus had ended a Fourth of July which Seeger had hoped to celebrate in Paris.

ALAN SEEGER, THE POET

Seeger, serving in the Foreign Legion, met his death before we entered the war

Scattered through France from Alsace to Flanders there were now graves of thousands of American soldiers who had fallen in battle or died in hospitals. The maintenance, marking, and listing of these last resting-places had for months been lodged in the Graves Registration Service of the American Army, that was making an effort to assemble graves so far as possible. About one hundred and fifty American cemeteries existed in the valleys of the Meuse and Aire, fifty near Nancy, Toul and Lunéville, another fifty north of Château-Thierry, twenty-five south of Montdidier, besides the cemeteries in the Vosges, in rear areas, base-ports and points around Amiens, where American soldiers had fought with the British. More than fifty thousand American graves were in time recorded.

Within a year a proposal was under consideration to create central cemeteries commemorative of various phases of the American effort in France, and where shafts could be put

up containing the names of those whose bodies had not been recovered owing to a kind of fighting that so often destroyed every vestige of the human form. To these cemeteries in France relatives could make pilgrimages, for it had become quite out of the question longer to consider any plan of digging up American dead and sending bodies back to America in large numbers. A Red Cross man went through these cemeteries taking photographs of every single grave to be sent to the soldier's family. Many hundreds had to be buried in blankets or in burlap, not in coffins, so that exhumation was impossible. When a soldier died, his grave was temporarily marked with his name on a sort of shingle;

JOYCE KILMER'S GRAVE IN FRANCE
Kilmer's grave is the one at the right

later came men of the Graves Registration Service to put up a small wooden cross with an aluminum name plate, five inches long by two and a half inches wide. A level lawn was usually chosen for a cemetery, each grave being six and

three-quarters feet long and two feet wide, the graves one foot apart, with two rows, head to head, with a forty-inch path between rows. When there were 800 graves in a cemetery, a flagstaff was provided.[10] Suggestions were made that these consecrated spots should be made less like cemeteries

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QUENTIN ROOSEVELT'S GRAVE IN FRANCE

and more like beautiful gardens, with flowers, fountains and pleasant resting-places, in which Americans whose boys slept in the land they helped to save might linger with great tranquillity, and a sense of more profound peace, than in any necropolis, however stately. Such memorial grounds might become the best beloved shrines among the holy places of the world. At Romagne, in the Argonne, a large cemetery was laid out.

For four months, almost to a day, the Germans had known, with rare exception, only forward movements, with captures of prisoners, thousands of guns, and piles of equipment. Now their enemies had turned upon them with lightning quickness and a smiting power of attack against which they

[10] Cable dispatch from Raymond G. Carroll to The *Sun* (New York).

could not stand up. The German offensive that was to compel peace had become an Allied offensive seeking a decision in what the German rank and file had been told was to be the last battle of the war. There was no longer any apprehension among Allies about the fifth phase of the German offensive. It was formidable no more; it had almost run its course. The initiative, which had remained with Germany since March 21, had changed hands, vitally shifting the entire situation in France. We now had the secret of those small attacks which the Allies had long been driving against German lines by the silent Foch. All had a common purpose. That purpose was preparation for just what had happened now. Through these small attacks the French and Americans seized local positions which vastly improved their line as a whole, and took the first and necessary step in the great counter-offensive.

In a sense the Franco-American advance was defensive; that is to say, the immediate object was to relieve the pressure on Reims, which was being enveloped, and to divert the Germans from a plan that seemed to include the isolation of Verdun, as well as the extension of their front for a further approach toward Paris. But in a larger sense Foch's strategy was offensive. The Germans had been maneuvering to demoralize his armies by converging strokes, intricate, confusing, baffling, and Foch was playing the game himself, moving forward, driving the surprized enemy before him, taking thousands of prisoners and many guns. With every thrust since March 21 the German driving power had declined. First at Mont Kemmel, then on the road to Compiègne, and again when they faced French and Americans on the Marne, and Gouraud between Prunay and the Argonne hills, showing each time marked lack of persistence in attack and failure in rallying power. The Germans who had been opposed to Pétain, Gouraud, and Liggett, the American general, were not the same impetuous and confident troops who had broken from their base at Cambrai on March 21, and with Hutier's tactics, and an unprecedented use of poison-gas, had driven ahead several miles a day. The "storm of peace," as the fifth phase of their offensive was called, had lost its violence. It was an appreciation of this

decline in striking power that caused Foch to make his defensive-offensive movement on a wide front.

The Germans were beaten, their last chance of victory snatched away, but even now some of the principal German papers continued to ignore the existence of a real American Army in France. Strange had been the persistence of that self-delusion. There had been blindness among German rulers to the inborn capacity of Americans for getting ready in haste and devoting their wealth and energy to the triumph of a cause of national freedom. It was beyond their mental and moral capacity to comprehend this plain fact, and so they were able still to keep their submissive subjects in ignorance of any possible danger from America. They did not believe our people had the war spirit, that we could make the needed preparation, or get forces across the sea until their own purposes had been accomplished. They thought their *U*-boats, their big ordnance, their flying monsters of the air, would keep the Americans out of Europe. Having shaken Russia into military paralysis and civic helplessness, they had kept up their offensive in the west, still contemptuous, or professing to be so, of the American forces which, in the course of a year, had been coming forward in great numbers, equipped and trained for war. Here on the Marne the German military masters were beginning to learn what Americans were. Ludendorff had known the British strength and the French strength, but it was only on the Marne that he learned how Americans could and would fight. Even now he did not know how much they could fight. They had taken their stand successfully at the side of the veterans of France, and that meant they were the equal of any soldiers. One incident showed their spirit. When a certain American was standing at the grave of his brother, north of Château-Thierry, as the Chaplain finished his prayer and the clods began to fall, he, with his lip between his teeth, turned away and said. "That makes six I've got to get. We had counted on three apiece." [11]

Around Courchamp, northwest of Château-Thierry, German resistance was more obstinate than on any other part of the line, but in this region the Allies captured cannon,

[11] Cable dispatch from Edwin L. James to The *Times* (New York).

machine-guns, and prisoners. Batteries and machine-gun positions were cut to shreds until their defenders came swarming out in thousands with the cry of "Kamerad" on their lips. Immense quantities of war materials fell into French and American hands. Here a new type known as "mosquito" tanks, a French type, did terrible execution. Driving ahead of infantry, turning, twisting, climbing over trenches and shell-holes, they poured steady streams of lead into gray-clad ranks. The plan of the attack was to segregate the entire group of German armies operating in the Marne salient from Soissons to Reims, which included all Germans operating under the Crown Prince down to Château-Thierry—that is, many of the best remaining troops in the German army, including several divisions of Prussian Guards. Neither side permitted sentiment to enter into the conflict. No battle displayed a greater spirit of merciless sacrifice. Village after village was subjected to terrible artillery-fire, until it seemed as if guns had been aided by an earthquake. The Germans occupied and often fortified every village farmhouse, and used them to the last, and therefore the Allies did not hesitate to reduce them. Grain-fields and vineyards escaped, but thousands of acres of over-ripe wheat were lost for lack of harvesters. Such grain-fields as were saved were saved through the rapid retreat of the Germans.

Foch aimed to cut the line of railway running south to Nanteuil which fed the Germans along the Marne. Another objective was Soissons, through which ran the main east and west railway to Reims, feeding German positions south. Foch believed and had taught that the offensive constituted the best form of defense, and so was seizing his opportunity to carry out in practise what he had preached during his whole military career. Foch put an entirely new face on the grandiose operation which Ludendorff had launched on July 15, and which he doubtless expected to run true to the form of the other German offensives of the previous four months. The American reinforcements on which Foch had long been counting had arrived and he had drawn on them to a great extent—had in fact taken over more men than fought in any battle of our Civil War—and there were more in sight. The great significance of his thrust lay in the fact that it was a

new departure. The four earlier German thrusts had been stopt in a different way. They ran their course and were not slowed down until Foch's reserves flowed in and slowly closed the breach; in all cases he fought simply to recover lost positions and remained on the defensive. Foch now let Reims and Epernay take care of themselves and fell on the Germans on the inactive western arm of the salient, on which they had every reason to expect, from past experience, that he would remain quiescent. Ludendorff therefore had to turn back and secure his flank and rear before he could go on further with his adventure in the Marne Valley.

As to German losses in this Marne battle, several accounts agreed in placing them at about 60,000. The Germans engaged at least sixty divisions, including twenty held in support, and by July 25 had used sixty-five. The Crown Prince's reserves were then virtually exhausted. The only fresh reserves remaining were not more than thirty divisions and these were attached to Crown Prince Rupprecht. Some observers thought Prince Rupprecht would now launch an attack on the British front, but the German command put off that opportunity until the psychological moment had passed. They were so committed to the great battle in progress on the Marne salient that they could not stake heavily on a dubious operation on another part of the front. Six months before a German statesman had announced that Germany was prepared to lose a million men, if necessary, to win the war in 1918. Germany's approximate losses to July 25 had been that million. Figures also showed that she could still muster about 2,760,000 fighting men. Opposing these were the French armies, the still intact British armies in the north, the American divisions, and hard-fighting Italian forces, backed by ceaseless waves of American soldiers flowing daily by thousands to Franco-British shores. Since March 21 Germany's two hundred and ten divisions had gone into battle each more than once and then been withdrawn. A withdrawal meant that a division had suffered a minimum of 20 per cent. casualties.

Four months had probably caused Germany 800,000 casualties, to which were to be added considerably over 100,000, due to normal losses for six months when divisions were

holding the line; in all approximately a million casualties. Sixty per cent. of the casualties were dead, permanently wounded, or men made prisoners. Forty per cent. eventually would return to the ranks. Germany's net losses in 1918 therefore had apparently been 600,000. The strength of a normal division is 20,000 men, whereof only about half are fighting men. On this basis, the German strength in bayonets at the beginning of 1918 was 2,010,000. Added to these were another 1,135,000 held in depots for filling gaps in divisions caused by casualties. The number of troops still remaining in depots was 735,000, of whom about 450,000 were youths of the youngest class. The rest were "recuperatives." Adding the total remaining depot reserve to the forces afield and the fighting strength of the German army became 2,760,000. What remained of the German army was far inferior in quality to the millions who went into mobilization in August, 1914, poured across Belgium, down into France, and eventually were thrown back by Joffre. Germany's remaining forces could fight on for months, but they were not only outnumbered by the Allies, but militarily were dominated almost everywhere.[12]

Germany was now operating on the outside of a curve while Foch was on the inside. But this was the smallest part of Foch's advantage, the greater part being that the Germans had nailed themselves down to the southern and eastern sides of the salient, and were not so able to move as Foch, who had kept himself free on the western side. With the Germans deeply involved, Foch was to a certain extent foot-loose. Speculation was raised as to whether the same tender care as to the Crown Prince's reputation, which the German High Command had evinced at Verdun and on other occasions, had not once more led them into a difficult pass. Complete success probably would have retrieved the Crown Prince's much-deprest stock, but Gouraud's defense east of Reims had made an extension of the salient west of the city particularly dangerous and created the opportunity which Foch so quickly seized. Notwithstanding the fact that the Germans threw large reinforcements into the battle, they were nowhere able to stem the onslaughts. French and

[12] Cable dispatch from Wilbur Forrest to The *Tribune* (New York).

American troops battered their way eastward into the deep triangular salient and successfully withstood a terrific counter-attack on the plateau southwest of Soissons.

The fighting was particularly violent around Soissons and Chaudon, where the Germans had sent in reserves. Here American artillery did notable work. While the Germans were now on the defensive, it was a mistake to say that they had been routed, except on a local and restricted front and a mistake to believe the probabilities pointed toward a decisive defeat which would open the road to Berlin. But a great and dangerous blow had been parried and a counter-thrust delivered, the consequences of which might be wide and were already considerable. Large reserves remained to the German and he still had the power to organize return blows. Considerable as had been his military reverse, his greatest defeat had been on the moral side.. The German people had watched with apprehension the entry of the Kaiser's army upon fields made familiar four years before as the scene of a great disappointment. For them a second battle of the Marne had now been fought, and the issue was again a defeat. Already Paris must have seemed to them to have been saved a second time. After the Piave had come a second Marne. Under similar circumstances Kluck had saved himself at the Ourcq in 1914, but while saving himself brilliantly he had made the French victory of the Marne inevitable and a German retirement to the Aisne imperative. "My right is routed, my left is retreating, my center is shaken, but I shall attack." These were Foch's memorable words at the crisis in 1914. But now he had his right, center, and left all intact. His former blow had earned him the title of "the first strategist in Europe" and he had again made good his title to that rank in the presence, not of Kluck, but of his most serious rival, Ludendorff.

Military critics became unstinting in praise of Foch's handling of the Allied armies. His genius had been shown in successfully passing from the defensive to the offensive, which Napoleon described as one of the most delicate operations in warfare. He had raised himself to a place next to Joffre as the greatest soldier the war had produced. Foch had satisfied himself as to what the German plan would

be. He had to do that; for nothing could be improvised or taken for granted when the men involved in a modern battle numbered millions. He knew the Germans could attack the Reims salient east and west and so he had directed Gouraud in the Champagne and Berthelot further west to hold their ground at any cost, while he himself waited quietly for the Germans to plunge into the big blunder which his knowledge of the grandiose German mind convinced him that the Germans sooner or later would commit. That German blunder was to hold Foch so cheaply as to leave their own flanks exposed. When the moment he had foreseen arrived, Foch delivered his lightning-stroke north and south of the Ourcq and under Pétain entrusted the carrying out of his plan to Fayolle, under whom Mangin and Degoutte had actual command of the two armies engaged. Fayolle was another great soldier who had proved his value. He was Foch's lieutenant in the battle of the Somme and afterward was sent by Foch to Italy, where he did fine work in reorganizing Victor Emmanuel's shattered army after its disastrous retreat from Carporetto in October, 1917.

This victory of Franco-Americans cheered the British in the north and they won at this time a success at Meteren which was a foretaste of far greater British deeds several weeks later. Altho a small thing compared with the triumph in the Marne salient, it was a tidbit which added to the sense of a turning of the tide. Meteren was only a bit of a town shot to a heap of ruin, but it was full of historical interest for the British. It was to Meteren that German cavalry had retreated in October, 1914, when chased off the Mont des Cats after the death of Prince Max of Hesse. All British soldiers who fought in Flanders knew Meteren well, having passed through it on their way to Bailleul or billeted there in barns and red-brick cottages. From a military point of view the advance was useful as it gave good observation of enemy-ground.

Ludendorff till July 17 had borne the title of Quartermaster General of the German Army. He now received (temporarily as it appeared later) the title of Chief of the General Staff, the title that had belonged to Hindenburg,

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SOISSONS AFTER THE FRENCH RECAPTURED IT

to whom no one knew what had happened. Reports had been current for two or three months that he was ill. These culminated in reports that he had died. Not until August was Hindenburg again in the saddle. Apparently he had been seriously ill, but there grew up later a belief that he had opposed the German offensive of March 21 and retired in consequence, giving place to Ludendorff.

Over the entire sixty-mile front from Soissons to Reims the Germans continued steadily to give ground, altho stubborn resistance was offered on some sectors. American and French troops northwest of Soissons broke through German lines, at some points more than three miles. Machine-guns literally mowed down Germans who endeavored to stay Allied progress. The entire southern bank of the Marne having been cleared of enemy-forces, French, British, and Italian troops were harrassing Germans southwest of Reims. Their plight was becoming increasingly hazardous. German armies were suffering the greatest reverse since the early days of the war when in the east the Russian steam-roller crusht all their opposition. The Crown Prince was not only being defeated, but was being soundly thrashed. Foch was squeezing the salient with Franco-American forces between Soissons and the Marne and with Franco-British troops between the river and Reims. The fate of Paris and of western civilization had once more been decided in the valley of the Marne. After four days of a desperate, but in the main fruitless, offensive, Ludendorff had lost the initiative and Foch instead was pursuing the offensive and harvesting a toll of guns and prisoners surpassing the German achievement in the first days of the March advance.

Something had come into the war that could not be exprest in figures or the calm phrases of official reports. It was intangible and imponderable, but it was there. Beside it the number of prisoners taken, the miles of land recaptured, were trifles. It was the feeling that, thanks to the nations that had been in the fight for four years, and thanks to a nation that had lingered, only to make firm strides at last, Prussian spirit and Prussian arms were going down. To say that this was the moral effect of our own millions pouring across the sea would have been ill-

timed. The Americans had brought youth, strength, courage, and ambition to avenge wrongs; but half their inspiration had come from the gallantry of peoples who had stood unflinchingly resolute through those weary years. Germany's final defeat, the single thought and hope of civilization, seemed nearer and nearer as the world peered through the smoke above the wreckage north of the Marne.

Just before his death early in January, 1919, Count von Hertling, the former German Chancellor,[13] said that at the beginning of July Germany's situation was most dangerous, in the sense that she "had played her last card," but she was expecting to see "grave events in Paris." He meant by this conditions on the 15th, but on the 18th "even the most optimistic among us understood that all was lost—the history of the world was played out in those three days." Hertling's frankness as to the gross deception under which he and all other Germans had labored from March to the middle of July was interesting. They had before been "certain of victory," since they trusted the "fantastic reports of well-meaning agents," who described the Allies as "at the end of their resources." The former Crown Prince, in an interview at that time[14] said that, before the Reims offensive of July 15, he had reported to Great Headquarters that there were forty American divisions in France, having received this information from his intelligence officers. To this statement Great Headquarters replied: "Nonsense. Impossible. There are only fourteen American divisions in France, and five of those are no good and can't fight."

Near the end of July refugees began to return to their wrecked villages along the Marne, old men, women and children walking in the wake of advancing Franco-Americans. High two-wheeled carts and baby carriages, filled with bedding and household goods, mingled with the war-traffic. Some found their homes wiped out; others saw their houses mere shells, with roofs torn off and walls pierced, crops laid waste, wheat-fields dotted with dead men, horses, and wreckage. Once more the Marne valley had been transformed from a beautiful country of peace

[13] To a correspondent of The *Matin* (Paris).

[14] With an Associated Press correspondent at his place of exile in Holland.

and plenty into a scene of desolation, but here and there the old beauty was bravely standing out and harvesting was being resumed. All old ideas of trench-fighting had disappeared. Everything was now on the move. Mounted troops, armored cars, automobiles, guns, wagons, and marching men filled the roads.

The French and Americans on July 22 threw their full weight against the south end of the battle-line between the Aisne and Marne and in bitterest fighting sent the Germans back another three miles northeast of Château-Thierry while the Germans made preparations for further retreat. Heavy congestion of traffic lines and the destruction of towns and supplies in their flight were indicative of a decision to withdraw to new lines. Twenty-five thousand Germans had been taken prisoner, with total casualties exceeding 175,000 and a toll of prisoners exceeding the total Allied losses. Heavy German counter-thrusts failed to parry the advancing columns. In night-and-day-attacks between the Ourcq and the Marne, and in defense of their menaced flank south of Soissons, the Germans struck heavy blows, but everywhere failed to drive the Allies from new-won gains. On the west wing the Americans captured three more villages, while the French took one. The railroad running south of Soissons was cut.

The tenth day after the fifth German offensive was launched found the Allied armies in a stronger position and the Germans in a worse plight than at any moment since the war began. "If the Germans can be beaten to this extent before the Americans have more than begun to enter the fight," was the comment of Paris, "what sort of a licking shall we be able to give them before the end of October, when we shall have a million Americans in line with us and at least another million already here and waiting their turn to butt in?" The strength of that argument lay in the fact that more than 70 per cent. of the Allied troops engaged in the battle thus far had been French. Yet this people, a week before, were firmly believed by the German High Command to possess no longer either commanders worth considering or troops to fight under them. Their miscalculation was an eloquent tribute, alike to the low brain

power of the Prussian military class and the inferiority of their boasted intelligence service, which had filled them with delusions.

The battle in the Marne salient more than anything else that had occurred in the war was convincing the world that the German military power, deprived of its overwhelming superiority in brute force, had become a mere idol with feet of clay as the French had always contended that they were. Prussian militarism, pitted on fairly level terms in men and guns against the keen intelligence of the French, was proving that its claim to be the first military nation in Europe was gigantic bluff. After four years of desperate resistance, Foch had successfully called their bluff. The battle not only lifted deadly anxiety from the heart of France, but converted what was formerly a calm logical faith with the Entente that sooner or later victory was assured, into a conviction that the end was in sight. Karl Rosner, the Kaiser's favored war correspondent, wired to the *Lokal-Anzeiger* from the Reims battlefield: "Surveying events to date, it becomes apparent that the lines of this new battle did not come into that full flow which one might have expected from the plan, and which gave to previous battles the stamp of great and fully exploited victories." This was the first admission from any German source that Ludendorff's plans had been upset by the Soissons offensive.

As the great victory was disclosed, France realized the genius of the man who had brought it about after months of patient waiting. Foch from the beginning had clearly foreseen the real facts of the situation, and that to wait was the only course possible. To every impatient Minister who, while abating none of his confidence, yet failed to see the facts, Foch had answered: "*Attendez, attendez*" (Wait, wait), and again had said the one word "tranquillity." Germans, with characteristic psychological blundering, had taken Foch's patient logic for inherent weakness. The overrated intelligence of their military machine had told them that Foch was "down and out," that he no longer had men to fight or generals to lead. German scorn of France, based on bought and poorly paid-for intelligence,

was one of the great factors Foch had relied on to lead them into that fatal blunder which landed the flower of their armies in the desperately critical situation in which they now found themselves. German amazement at Foch's inexplicable lightning stroke of July 18 from a direction where they were firmly convinced no danger could come, was only equaled by the disorder into which they were thrown by this destruction of all their scientifically thought-out plans.

Throughout the battle Foch showed that he possesst two qualities which are, perhaps, more necessary than any others for successful military leadership—patience in defense and vigor in attack. When he assumed command at the end of March Paris was in jeopardy. The temptation to save it from capture by throwing reserves into the fighting line before the time was ripe for their effective use must have been great. Counselors urged him to act, and critics blamed his hesitation. Taking no heed of either, he remained on the defensive, meeting Ludendorff's successive strokes with the necessary force to render them ineffective, but reserving his own blows till he felt he could strike home.

For 48 hours it was doubtful if Ludendorff would succeed in extricating his troops from the trap into which he had led them. To change from the offensive to the defensive when the movement of 400,000 men was concerned, was a difficult problem. The mere promulgation of the necessary orders must have taxed to the utmost the staff organization of the two executive German commanders. The first necessity was to secure the two flank positions at Soissons and Reims, to prevent the French breaking into the lines of communication of the retreating troops. Rear-guard detachments had thus to be distributed along the whole front to cover the retreat and gain time. There were heavy losses of men and guns, but there was no *débâcle*. Disastrous as the retreat was to Ludendorff's strategical aims, it was conducted "according to plan" with surprizing regularity, and without any approach to a rout, which with less able leadership would have been the inevitable fate of the retiring troops.

The German plan for July 15 was so grandiose that, in view of the forces available to execute it, it could

not have been justified except on the supposition that the French Army was exhausted, and that the Americans could not yet afford them any real assistance. Their plan was, in substance, a return to the plan of the original invasion of Belgium and France, and it failed in the same way, for Foch seized the characteristics of the situation with sobriety and acumen equal to Joffre's in the earlier crisis.

U. S. OFFICIAL PHOTO FROM PAUL THOMPSON.

AMERICAN GRAVES IN FRANCE

The picture shows the method that was employed by the Graves Registration Service of the American Army for marking these graves

In 1914 the battle of the Marne had been covered by defense of the eastern frontier by Castelnau and Dubail at the Grand Couronné. In like manner the offensive in July, 1918, was covered by the defense of the Champagne front. Gouraud's success there had been the condition of success for the whole plan. From the first, even before the attack was launched, the French command saw its opportunity for a counter-offensive stroke, and prepared to deliver it. The army of Boehm was hardly settled on the Marne in 1918 before the possibility of delivering a blow on

its west flank was realized. On July 12 the necessary divisions were concentrated between Montdidier and Villers-Cotterets. After consultation with Fayolle, Mangin, Degoutte, and Pershing, Pétain had worked on and presented the plans to Foch, and on July 13 they were returned to him approved. July 17 and 18 the available troops were all brought into the leafy shelter of the Villers-Cotterets region, and the artillery into its emplacements. Boehm meanwhile was too sure of himself, his masters too confident that the French were done for, and that the Americans were good for nothing, to have any suspicion of the fate that awaited them. When Mangin and Degoutte broke against their feeble left flank they carried with a rush their first positions, and before nightfall the second and stronger positions were mastered. For the German command a general retreat to the Aisne was made necessary. Boehm, within a salient then only thirty by twenty miles in extent, had crowded in thirty-five divisions, with artillery, munition services, and supplies, and it was a region having only one free railway line and four small and two large roads, of which one was under Allied fire.[15]

Three times in four years the Germans had undertaken to achieve a decision in the western field. Three different commanders, Moltke the younger, Falkenhayn, and Ludendorff, each had essayed to solve the great problem. At the Marne, Moltke and Ludendorff failed, and at Verdun, Falkenhayn. Each of the earlier failures cost the Germans the initiative on the Western Front. It remained now to be seen what would be the effect of Germany's third defeat. Each failure had been the result of miscalculation, of overconfidence, of a false appraisal alike of the French army and the French people. The German High Command undertook operations which could be undertaken only in the presence of a beaten foe, and three times this presumption had met its punishment.[16]

[15] Cable dispatch from G. H. Perris to The *Times* (New York).

[16] Principal Sources: *The Fortnightly Review* (London), The *Times*, The *Sun*, New York; Frederick Palmer's "America in France" (Dodd, Mead & Co.), The *Tribune* (New York), Associated Press and United Press dispatches.

## III

## LUDENDORFF'S RETREAT FROM THE MARNE SALIENT

July 25, 1918—August 6, 1918

LUDENDORFF'S retreat from the Marne was not so hurried as Kluck's retreat of four years before had been. The armies of Moltke, then Germany's Chief of Staff, had much further to go, the one Kluck commanded having penetrated twenty miles below the Marne. Moltke's armies had outrun their heavy artillery and transport even more than Ludendorff's had done and so had to foot it back in hot haste to bases and fortified lines above the Aisne. Ludendorff never got further than four or five miles south of the Marne and was comparatively safe in his retreat, once he had reached the Vesle. He had in all only about twenty miles to cover and only rear-guard actions to fight. The severity of these actions, however, showed how cramped he was for elbow-room. His first zone of safety lay between the Vesle and the Aisne, and north of the Aisne he had formidable positions which had been occupied by Kluck and held by the Germans for more than two years thereafter.

Under many similar conditions, however, the newly beaten German army was retiring from the Marne. General von Boehm, who had been called up from Italy to aid Ludendorff had the same objective as Kluck, which was to escape the deadly embrace of two victorious Allied armies and to establish a front where he could make a stand. His problem for five days was to protect the German right flank while their center was drawn out of a difficult and dangerous position. To do this he counter-attacked violently and frequently between Soissons and Château-Thierry. Once he had lost Château-Thierry, the fate of his positions on the north bank of the Marne was sealed. Unless he could check Foch in the immediate future, he would have to evacuate Soissons and all territory south of a line running east of Reims.

He was already losing control of the Paris-Nancy railroad, which he had cut in the first days of June; had lost several times as many prisoners and several times as many guns as Moltke lost in the first battle, and his forces were retreating in far greater disorder out of the most important ground he had gained in the whole campaign of 1918, his losses in prisoners, guns, and material the greatest in German military history. One had to go back to Jena to find a parallel. Ludendorff's army it was true had not yet been routed as Napoleon routed the Prussians. He was skilfully retiring and avoiding supreme disaster, and there was still some limit to the extent of the military defeat Germany had suffered, but the moral disaster had reached the high level of the first Marne, and the doom of the German military power had been definitely sealed. A successful retreat from the Marne might still leave the Germans about where they were in September 1914, with minor gains in Picardy and Flanders still standing, but over against all this was loss of the offensive, and losses in men since March, which seemed to approximate a million casualties. American soldiers who had shared with the French the glory of this victory gave proof that America had arrived in time to help meet the crisis. Already had the consequences of the Russian collapse been liquidated without evil consequences to us or to our Allies.

Franco-American troops continued to make steady progress in pushing ahead for direct attacks and cutting lines of communication. The whole German line south of Soissons was virtually gone by July 23, the German armies outgeneraled and out-fought, their main task now being to prevent defeat from taking on the proportions of a rout. The Franco-Americans smashed forward on a ten mile front and made gains of more than a mile on the tip of the foe's dwindling salient between the Ourcq and Marne. Along the Marne the Germans clung tenaciously to their defenses, but American thrusts at Jaulgonne widened the bridgehead there, brought in prisoners and forced the enemy to yield further ground on the river bank. Further east the French struck repeatedly across the river, meeting heavy resistance, but gaining heights north of Courcelles

and winning new ground in the river bend to the west. The Germans, beset on three sides by raking artillery-fire, continued their retreat toward the north. Southwest of Reims, Franco-British forces stormed defenses and drove forward for more than half a mile, ejecting Germans from their hold on the outskirts of the forest of the Mountain of Reims.

The German position between the Aisne and the Marne was becoming more critical every day, almost every hour. Owing to their too rapid advance in May from the Aisne southward, they had had no time to construct supplementary railroads, and now that the main road from Soissons to

GERMAN SHELLS LEFT BEHIND IN THEIR RETREAT

Château-Thierry was in Allied hands, and other roads on which they relied for transport were under fire, they were in new difficulties for obtaining food, and ammunition. Retreat became for them a measured and complicated operation and could not be hurried without becoming disastrous. Ludendorff had sent enormous masses of men into this salient and had stored there vast quantities of material with which to feed a further offensive south of the Marne and up the Marne valley through Epernay to Châlons. An outlet for it south and southeast had been barred by the Franco-American

defense, the forward flow interrupted and the whole lower half lumbered up and congested.

Ludendorff's problem therefore became one of getting his men and stores of material back to the north. He had only one good railroad up the main alleyway of retreat—that running from Fismes down to Fère-en-Tardenois, and thence to Manteuil-Nôtre-Dame, but, the clearway in places was hardly more than ten miles broad, while in going south he had had a clearway of more than fifteen miles. He had not only lost use of the railroad and highway down the west side of the salient, but all the other roads and bases along his line of retreat were subject to aerial bombardments. Every night the French were dropping tons of explosives on Fère-en-Tardenois, his main western base, and on Fismes and the subsidiary depots between them. The Marne salient was done for, the most considerable German retreat since the first Marne had set in, and yet the danger of a great military disaster to the Germans had probably passed for the time at least. The Germans seemed likely to get out of the trap, not as expeditiously and skilfully as Kluck got away, not without a staggering loss of prisoners and guns, but without surrender of an army.

Germans would not have admitted even this much, but they had refused to admit that there had been any battle of the Marne in 1914 for at least two years after they had lost that battle. In Germany there were, however, men who, without making it public, had seen the real meaning of the first Marne defeat. One was the Crown Prince, whose judgment probably did not count for much; but another was Admiral von Tirpitz. In May, 1919, there was published in Berlin a volume of Tirpitz's reminiscences, in which was a letter addrest by him to his wife from Great Headquarters, on September 20, 1914, in which he said: "This defeat has rendered our appalling sacrifices useless and has brought Germany into a very dangerous position." He thought, however, something might be saved, but it would be mainly done only by the popular support of the war continuing. In any case, "all will be over so far as caste privileges are concerned. In victory or defeat, we shall no longer escape a pure democracy."

Important gains by French and Americans were made on July 24 in the Ourcq region against fighting equal in ferocity to any of the year. Driving through what seemed an impregnable living wall of gray Germans, Franco-American troops struck toward the heart of the German position which was Fère-en-Tardenois. When they should reach that point, only five miles away, the German defense would have to crumble, for the last remaining railroad, except for some temporary ones, would pass out of their control. It was now only seventeen miles across the pocket at points where the Allies had pinched the sides in hardest. Even then, should a great mass of men attempt to escape, they would be within range of heavy French guns from both sides.

In the fighting north of Château-Thierry and around Epieds, in which Americans participated, there was fierce machine-gun work. The village changed hands three times and was almost levelled to the ground. The Americans attacked in the morning and the fighting almost immediately became what they termed "Indian warfare." With machine-guns concealed behind rocks and trees—the section where the fighting occurred was extremely well wooded—men, depending on their soldierly initiative and accurate rifle-shooting, crept up on their objectives. Americans, by temperament and training, were peculiarly well-fitted for this type of fighting. North of Château-Thierry they and the French met with fierce resistance, for here German machine-gunners and infantrymen were striving hard to extricate large numbers of German forces from the danger of capture, and to save part of the enormous quantity of guns and war-materials which it was impossible to get out except by highroads over an undulating and wooded country. Between the Marne and Reims, where the Crown Prince had brought forward large numbers of picked reinforcements, they had hard struggles. Gaged by the war-maps, with long range guns on both sides of the U-shaped battle-front, heavily shelling them from behind the actual fighting fronts, with airmen bombing them and infantry attacking them on all sides with rifle and light gun-fire, their situation became hazardous. The congestion inside the pocket had become too great to admit of rapid extrication, and yet the east and

west retaining walls had to be kept from crumbling. In order to hold Fère-en-Tardenois, Ludendorff was obliged tc check his retirement from the Marne and defend the high-road running north from Jaulgonne to Fère-en-Tardenois. Foch now had nearly as many divisions on hand as Ludendorff; his forces were as strong in comparison with Ludendorff's as had been Joffre's compared with Moltke's. By a successful battle or arrest, followed by a brilliant counter-thrust, he had wrecked the German plans, disorganized their armies on a wide front and passed to an offensive which was still gaining ground and exacting a high price alike in Germans killed and captured and in Germans reserves consumed in rescuing an imperiled army.

The plight of the Crown Prince's soldiers, hemmed in by the salient, became each day more critical. The Allied blows on July 25 brought the corridor through which they had to return, if they returned at all, down to a scant twenty miles at its narrowest point, and Allies guns virtually commanded the area of their retreat. French and American troops on the west and French and British on the east were slowly driving in the sides of the salient. Fère-en-Tardenois, the German military nerve center, continued under cross-fire from French and American artillery, while troops were never far behind the retreating forces. It was estimated at one time that the German losses of all kinds had been more than 200,000, of which perhaps 30,000 were inflicted by Americans. The total casualties of the Allies were believed to be under 100,000, of which not more than 20 000 were American. With constant fire on the clearway and with the middle growing more narrow every day, it did not require any violent rupture of the line to constrict the safe outlet to a few miles, in which case troops jamming through from below, like sand passing through the neck of an hour-glass, had almost as much to fear from their own disorganization as from pursuit by the enemy. Under pressure from forces driving upon Fère-on-Tardenois, the Germans faced withdrawal across the Ourcq under the same costly circumstances as those which marked their retirement across the Marne. Practically all the interior of the salient was within reach of fire from Allied artillery and airmen, especially heavy bom-

bardments being directed on Fère-en-Tardenois, where the elaborate railway and highway system had been practically wiped out, with staggering German losses.

A crowning success was attained on July 28, when French and American troops entered Fère-en-Tardenois. At the same time, French and American advance-guards established themselves on the north bank of the Ourcq, while the French on the eastern side of the salient prest westward and captured Olizy and Anthenay. Anthenay was only a mile from the railroad which ran northeast through Ville-en-Tardenois, and above that to Reims and Fismes, another German supply-station. The retreat had begun two nights before, having been precipitated by the British capture of Chaumuzy and the Franco-American capture of Oulchy-le-Château, with an advance toward Fère-en-Tardenois. It quickly extended northeast and then northwest as far as the Ourcq. In its southern part, the Marne pocket had been narrowed to a scant ten miles, in its northern part to twenty-three miles. About half the ground taken by the Germans in the Marne drive in May had been regained. The fall of Fère-en-Tardenois was the greatest loss the Germans had suffered. Here they had deposited food and munitions necessary for an army of about 1,000,000 men.

Almost the entire road running from Dormans northeast to Reims had been seized and the Americans were doing effective work in the Andre Valley, where, with the aid of French tanks, they were beating the enemy back. The Americans had advanced five miles and taken several towns. Allied troops had nearly passed the Fère forest, had taken all of Riz forest, occupied Champvoisy, and reached Goussancourt. Cavalry, tanks and airplanes created havoc. Fighting of desperate character was taking place on both flanks of the salient, because so long as Ludendorff could hold his flanks he would escape a Sedan. Berlin for the first time, but in a halting manner, now admitted a retreat from the Marne was under way. The Allies put the Paris-Châlons railroad line in operation again for the first time since the Germans advanced to the north bank of the Marne, a trunk-line which fed most of the front from Reims to Verdun and southward to the Vosges.

Ludendorff accepting the inevitable had begun in earnest to retreat. He no longer sought to camouflage to the German public the utter failure of his last offensive, or the bitter defeat which his armies had suffered. Political considerations had governed him. The Crown Prince, in nominal command of the forces in the Champagne before this, had in a measure rehabilitated his much-damaged military reputation through the easy success he won in May in the drive south to the Marne from the Chemin-des-Dames. Even after Foch broke his lines on the west side of the salient and the armies of Boehm were recalled from beyond the Marne, the German public had been "fed up" on reports of victories north of the Marne. To confess the truth at once would have meant that the vainglorious heir apparent to the Imperial German Crown would again be reduced to the level of military inconsequences which he had gained by his failure before Verdun. Ludendorff's wavering strategy of four or five days was explained by the necessity for a window-dressing operation for the Crown Prince's fame. So he drew down reserves from beyond the Aisne in the hope of stopping Foch's drive. He fought hard at Epieds, he held on as long as he could to the Forest of Fère, the Forest of Riz and the whole Châtillon district. He counter-attacked all the way up from Châtillon to Reims. But his position in the depths of the rectangle became too uncomfortable to justify a prolonged effort to hold his ground.

Since the resumption of fighting on July 15, French and British machines acting in conjunction had brought down 138 German airplanes, while the British had accounted for 99 destroyed and 17 driven down, making a total of 254 enemy machines lost. The Germans for the same period reported bringing down 226 Allied airplanes. Allied aircraft had played an enormous part in the great battle, particularly in enemy back-areas, with lines of communication, supports, ammunition dumps, and concentrations. Airplanes constantly raided railway-stations and Marne bridges, and silenced enormous batteries, bombed and machine-gunned advancing infantry and caused innumerable casualties at Marne crossings. The British had raided Rhenish towns, munition centers, rail-

way-sidings, chemical works, engine-sheds, German aerodromes, and anti-aircraft gun emplacements Most of this work was done at night. The Offenburg sidings had been bombed four times. The Manheim chemical works, the Thionville station, the Pforzheim factory had been bombed. There had been twenty-five raids in all, dropping more than 174 tons of bombs, 13 on Estaires and Merville, 13 on Armentières, Méricourt and Briey. More than 20 tons had been dropt on the railway-systems of Lille, Cambrai, and Seclin. The nature of the havoc wrought by the French air-squadrons was shown by the fact that between July 15 and 22 along the battle-front more than 182 tons of bombs were dropt in daylight operations and 102 in night-raids. In four days one group of airplanes dropt 15,000 bombs.

Everywhere Allied troops, including Americans, were pressing the Germans hard. Bitter fighting took place near Fère-en-Tardenois and at Sergy, both of which were in the hands of the French and Americans. At Sergy the Germans paid the Americans the compliment of reinforcing their battle-line with two divisions of well-tried Prussian Guards and Bavarians, whose courage previously had been tested when the tide of battle was going against the Germans. The first efforts of the Guards and Bavarians were partly successful and the Americans were forced to withdraw from Sergy and other positions, but the Germans could not force their main body across the river. The stream was narrow and shallow, and some detachments of Americans at times were driven back, but always there remained enough Americans on the north bank to check German rushes, and the Americans returned to the fray with great spirit. Scores of times men in khaki and gray met in the streets of the little town and on the slopes of the river-banks in hand-to-hand encounters. The bayonet was used, but the Americans effectively used their pistols also. There was much fighting even in the water, the Germans attempting to rush their antagonists to the south bank of the stream. The blood-tinted and muddied stream gave evidence of the violence of the conflict.

The fourteenth day saw little activity on the part of either contending force—except in the nature of reciprocal bombardments. Attempts were made to expel the Americans and

French from positions they held north of the Ourcq in the region of Fère-en-Tardenois, and along the western side of the salient near Oulchy-le-Château, and a watchful eye was kept by the Germans on Americans standing at the apex of the battle-line near Fère-en-Tardenois. Guns showered them with high explosives and gas-shells. The Germans continued jealously to guard the extreme eastern and western flank of the salient in order to ward off possible surprize-attacks. Ludendorff had fought his way thus far out of a trap with much deliberation, but he had lavished precious German reserves in order to save his face. Germany was flooded with misrepresentations of what happened. Military critics entered upon a campaign of camouflage and exculpation, the aim of which was to delude the German public into thinking the retreat was only another voluntary strategic retirement, such as the retreat from the Marne in September, 1914, was long represented to them to be. To cover up a great defeat—moral as well as strategic—the German command refused to admit its losses in an enterprise now bankrupt, but fought bitterly to stave off the inevitable. Apologists in the German press said Ludendorff intended soon to attack on another front, where the situation was more promising and so could not afford to let himself be pinned down "under locally unfavorable conditions" to a dead sector like the Soissons-Reims salient.

The Americans were now in full possession of Sergy and ground beyond. Standing out from other fighting along the Ourcq, was the bitter struggle for Sergy, which was taken and retaken nine times. To reach this town, the Americans waded waist-deep across the Ourcq and advanced up the opposite bank in a hail of machine-gun fire. When they reached the machine-gun positions, they swept over them and took the town. Artillery aided in holding off the Germans. Then the Prussian Guards came up and attacked four times after the Americans had first captured the town. Each time they took it the Americans retook it, and finally drove off the guards despite a vigorous defense. Never had the Americans done better fighting, or shown to better advantage. It was not the deadly work of German machine-guns in trees and houses, and even in churches, that awoke the wrath of

our men, nor the terrific barrage, but the sight of snipers killing their wounded American comrades. Then they saw red and made the Germans pay the price. Time after time the German's turned machine-guns on stretcher-bearers. A German airplane swept low and dropt a bomb which destroyed an open truck loaded with wounded men, killing the driver and two wounded men. Stretcher-bearers wading the river with wounded were fired on. The Germans left nothing undone to make the Americans newly glad for their audacious and gallant charge.

Tremendous stores of German ammunition, found in the forests of Fère and Riz, led officers to believe that the Allied offensive had nipt in the bud great German plans for a drive on Epernay. Forests in the surrounding country north of the Marne had become great arsenals for German ammunition, big shells being particularly numerous. At places along the edges of woods were large shells stacked up like cordwood over long areas. Thousands of these shells were intended for 210-millimeter guns. All through the forests were ammunition depots, more than an acre of ground being covered in each of several places with shells of all calibers. Some of the smallest shells were labeled "for immediate use." Along roads and other open places, the shells were camouflaged with limbs of trees. Some of these depots were devoted entirely to big shells, others exclusively to projectiles of small sizes, including gas-shells, high-explosive projectiles, and cartridges for machine-guns and rifles. From roadways near forest-edges mile after mile of cases of rifle-cartridges could be seen, winding in and out and following tree-lines like fences.[17]

The German retirement had passed the midway stage. There was little left of the salient. Ludendorff's armies were well on their way to a line of safety drawn east and west above Fère-en-Tardenois and Ville-en-Tardenois. For the Germans, the saving feature of the situation was that their two flanks held firmly above this line. On the Soissons side the Franco-American drive was held along the highroad from Soissons to Oulchy-le-Château. Similarly, on the Reims side down to Ardre River, the advance had hardly more than

[17] Cable dispatch from Edwin L. James to The *Times* (New York).

recovered ground yielded in the first two days of the German offensive for Epernay and Châlons. Ludendorff's retreat was practically a closed operation, so far as tactical results were concerned. Within a few days was to come a moral contest between him and Foch—a test of brains and resolution. What remained to be decided was with whom should rest the offensive.

Ludendorff had solved the second of the great problems set for him by Foch's counter-offensive, which was to avoid the disaster of an envelopment and capture of huge German forces. He had mastered that by summoning a reserve army and placing it on hills in a circle north and east of Soissons. At the same time he had reinforced his divisions and massed heavy artillery at the Reims corner. Having done this, the neck of the bottle in which Boehm's army was involved could not be blocked, and a retirement of his troops became possible. His next problem was to remove a vast concentration of guns, munitions, and supplies that had been collected for his expected great strike south. For a week he was engaged in trying to move these supplies and munitions out of the salient. Of the four compartments which constituted the salient east of Château-Thierry, that south of the Marne had been cleared within forty-eight hours after Foch attacked. The much larger compartment between the Marne and Ourcq was not entirely evacuated until July 22. There remained two more compartments, that between the Ourcq and the Vesle and that between the Vesle and the Aisne.

The greatness of Foch's success had not been measured by the capture of men or guns, or even of territory, but by the extent of the dislocation of German plans for the campaign of 1918. Foch did not attempt to envelop and capture the German army; he had not used forces sufficient for such a task, either because they were not assembled, or because he recognized that the moment had not yet come for such a stroke.

On July 29 American troops fighting north of the Ourcq enlarged their victory at Sergy. Soldiers from the Middle-Western and Eastern States, dashing through a heavy barrage, drove their line northward for a distance of about two miles. The Americans held the apex of the long pointed line

CANADIAN OFFICIAL PHOTO.

FRENCH PEOPLE RELEASED FROM CAPTIVITY BY FOCH'S OFFENSIVE

running across the salient. There was heavy fighting in the center and on the right and left anchor points southwest of Reims and south of Soissons. On both points the Germans were keeping a watchful eye, fearing that Allied troops might yet press back the line and threaten the Crown Prince. The most determined counter-attack that the Germans made was shattered within twenty-four hours. It had brought them temporary possession of villages scattered along thirty miles of line, but they failed to hold them. North of the Ourcq, the Germans, in a counter-attack, drove the Americans out of Cierges, but this gain was more than overcome later by the penetration of Americans northward from Sergy.

On July 30 Seringes was taken. The Germans then turned upon it artillery and machine-gun fire, which continued for two days, after which they emerged from the Nesles forest in a fresh attempt to retake the village. The Americans withdrew, as if they had been forced to retire, whereupon the Germans crept down stealthily from high ground to the village, convinced that they had their opponents beaten, and additional German troops were poured in until the town was occupied. As the Germans began to organize their defenses, they encountered bullets coming in from three sides of the village. It was not long before the Americans had in operation an encircling movement, forming a ring around the town. Slowly the ring tightened and the defenders saw their doom as the Americans came on with one wild yell and closed with the foe. Fierce uproar gave place to a strange silence as man grappled man. Only the clash of steel on steel and the groans of the stricken could be heard. The Americans in this kind of fighting were more than equal to Prussian Guardsmen and in a little more than ten minutes all was over. Except for a few prisoners, every German in the village had breathed his last. Such was the final capture of Seringes.

During the night other Germans attempted to retake Sergy, but each time were repulsed with heavy losses. Then they made a fierce assault on Meurcy farm, which was still piled with German dead left there the day before, when every man defending it died at his post. There again they were unsuccessful, altho not until steel crossed steel in a big

farmyard and the heaps of German slain had been doubled in the ruins about it. This was classic fighting—man against man with no call for quarter. The pride of the professional soldier was up against the pride of the freeman, both preferring death to surrender. Members of the Prussian Guard, taken prisoners, said their orders had been to hold the line at all costs. Machine-guns were rushed against them, but the Prussians kept on firing. From neighboring slopes came bullets and shells, but the Americans held on grimly to their gains. Sergy, twice entered by the Germans, was still in American hands. From Hill 134, overlooking Seringes, to Hill 212, dominating Sergy, their line was intact.

On both sectors notable gains made on August 1 placed the German armies in precarious positions. From immediately south of Soissons to northwest of Fère-en-Tardenois, French, British, and American troops pushed back the armies of the Crown Prince. Northwest of Fère the entire elbow where it turned eastward along the northern bank of the Ourcq was blotted out, making the line straight from Fère to Hartennes and giving the Allies better ground over which to work in further outflanking Soissons on the southeast and for pressing on toward Fismes in conjunction with troops, particularly Americans who were holding strategic points north and northeast of Fère. In this fighting Allied troops took high ground north of Grand Rozoy, pushed on past Beugneux and arrived before Cramoiselle and Cramaille. The general advance was about two miles, and 600 Germans were made prisoner. The most important gain was on the upper western point of the "V," southwest of Fère. Here Cierges and Meunière Wood were taken, a maneuver which placed the Germans in a seemingly precarious plight, for Allied guns would be able to rake the Germans if they should endeavor to make their way northward, their only avenue of escape being by an enfilading fire. Through capture of the Meunière Wood the width of the "V," from the fringes of the forest to Rotigny on the east, was cut down relatively to four miles. The Germans contested stubbornly the advance, but all to no avail. Since the battle began on July 15, Allied troops had now taken more than 34,000 prisoners. Between Seringes and Cierges northeast and southeast of Fère,

Americans made gains over a four-mile front, pushed farther beyond Sergy and reached within a mile and a half of Chamery.

The battle in the Reims-Soissons sector was really over, or at least abandonment by the Germans at Soissons and the territory of the Reims-Soissons salient had become a foregone conclusion, and retreat, at least on the line of the Vesle, was imposed on the Crown Prince. He had been so hard prest as to have sacrificed several first-class divisions, and compelled Prince Rupprecht to send more troops to his assistance. He had received a severe blow in loss of men, material, and prestige, and had the option of throwing the blame on Ludendorff, and admitting himself a mere figurehead, or accepting responsibility for a failure that was a fitting pendant to his ghastly one at Verdun. The largest number of German divisions reported as fighting in the defeated army was seventy-one. Three-quarters of a million men was a fair appraisal of the German fighting strength on the Marne, at least a quarter less than were used in the first battle of the Marne, and comparing with eighty divisions used in the battle of Picardy in March The Germans had lost between a quarter and a third of their men, or from 200,000 to 250,000, upward of 500 guns and a mass of war-material, which had not yet been tabulated, but was known to be large. About 30 per cent. of the Allied troops were Americans.

In a period of fourteen days the Germans had retired an average of ten miles on a front of fifty, with a maximum of fifteen, and had evacuated more ground than they surrendered on the morrow of any battle in the west, save at the first battle of the Marne, and from a third to a half as much as was involved in the famous Hindenburg "victorious retreat" of March and April, 1917. The amount of ground was slight compared with the military value of the evacuated district because Foch had regained control of the whole Marne Valley and effectually barred it to German advance. The German was about where he was in the first days of May, save that he still stood south of the Aisne and Vesle. This was about all he had to show for three months of preparation and for three great battles—that of the Aisne, which was a victory; that of Compiègne, which was a check,

and the recent battle, which was an undeniable defeat followed by a considerable retreat. The German's time table had been smashed again as it was in 1914, and we were beginning to get revelations of the importance the Germans attached to their defeat. Their depression was as great as that of the Allies after the recent battle in Picardy. They had lost a campaign and they knew it, despite the lame efforts of their General Staff to minimize the disaster. They had lost their chance to win the war, lost more than a big battle, more than the prestige of Ludendorffian successes. They had lost the larger part of the advantages acquired by the Russian collapse.

Hardly a soul in Scotland had ever heard of Buzancy until the end of July. This place was one of the gates to a plateau four miles south of Soissons. Eight famous Scottish regiments had stormed Buzancy. They were the same men who had saved Arras in the critical hours of March 28. After a ten-mile march they had been ordered to make an attack. Not having yet received their artillery, they used American guns. At first they occupied positions at Berzy-le-Sec, a little north of Buzancy, and, after a fight in which they were exposed to galling machine-gun fire, reached their objectives, consolidated their positions and moved further south to Buzancy. Next day came on order to attack Buzancy. By noon the first wave went through Buzancy, their objectives attained. Then came a hitch. Troops to the right of them could not advance and were compelled to fall back. The Germans turned an enfilading fire on them and the struggle became frightful, a great deal of it hand-to-hand fighting. In one street two bodies were found locked together. A German officer had in his hand a revolver with which he had shot his opponent; the other, a Scotsman, held a rifle of which the bayonet was run through the German's body. That kind of fighting went on everywhere. At one place there was a high wall which the Scotsmen scaled by climbing on each other's shoulders—which recalled a Roman method of scaling the walls of fortified towns—facing a terrific fire as they dropt on the other side. Once they got over they drove out the enemy.

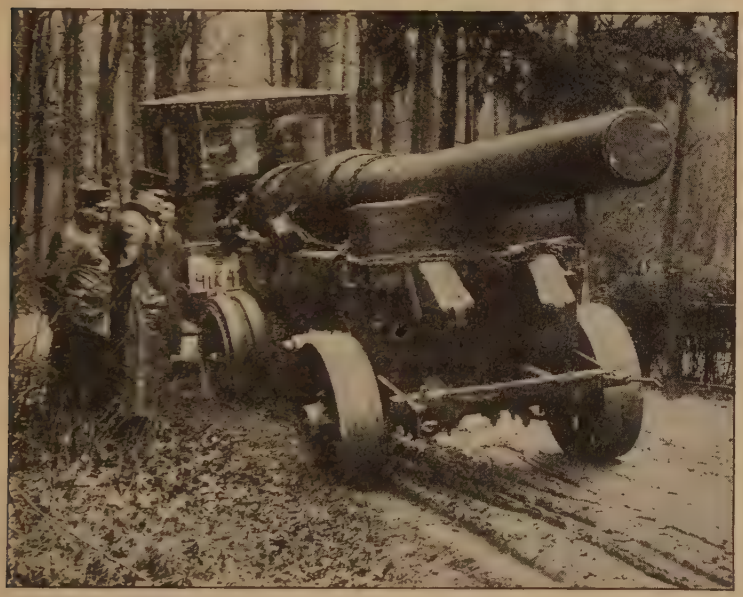
Once more the best of German troops, the Fourth Guards

and Jaegers, veterans of mountain-fighting in Italy and Roumania, had proved themselves inferior not only to British and French, but to American soldiers from city and country, factory and farm. A vast, lumbering enterprise that was to bear the Germans to victory had lost its native force, and was being slowly rolled back in its tracks, its halts and reactions coming rather from its ponderous bulk and obstacles in its path than from its own fighting-power. The retreat had ceased to be an orderly, stubborn thing; it was now hurried, precipitate and destructive. Allies on the north and south line through Soissons had spoiled all German calculations, first by the capture of the Butte of Chalmont and later by the capture of Hill 205. These took the heart out of the defense, and opened up the country back of German positions for many miles. It was an advantage which could not be withstood, and the activity of the French commander permitted him to reap an immediate harvest.

Only one hope remained to the Germans—on the heights along the eastern lip of the Crise River, which runs through Soissons, its confluence with the Aisne being there. As a river the Crise is nothing but a narrow, shallow creek, but it was a defensive position because of steep banks and the heights which crown them. Here the Germans were beaten badly, after bitter fighting. It was doubtful if the war had seen more persistent fighting. The Germans were battling to avert disaster, the French and Americans to impose disaster upon a defeated foe. Night and day the fighting continued until either the Allies had to give up the attack, or the German defense had to break. The limit had been reached and something had to crack, and that side was forced to crack whose morale was lowest. The French were supported in this Marne salient fighting by 150,000 American troops, not first-class troops as measured by experience on European battlefields, not first-class troops as measured by length of time in trenches and familiarity with modern war as waged in Europe, but troops of the highest class in soul and spirit, not grown war-weary and stale, but eager, full of initiative, and of the spirit that knows not defeat. What they lacked in experience was furnished by the French, and the French were spurred on by the spirit of those who supported them. It

was this morale which beat down the morale of the Germans, until their defense cracked.

On August 2 French troops entered Soissons, and, with British contingents, crossed the Crise along its whole length, thus regaining a considerable strip of territory southeast of the city. The day's gains were practically continuous from Soissons to Reims. The Germans were forced to precipitate retreat between Fère-en-Tardenois and Ville-en-Tardenois. Near Reims, Gueux and Thillois were wrested from the



COURTESY OF "MOTOR," N. Y.

HEAVY GUN AND TRACTOR

This tractor could transport a gun eleven miles in one hour and a half

Germans, who also abandoned the whole of the Chaudun plateau between the Coeuvres and Crise valleys, ground which had been a disputed battlefield for weeks. French cavalry operated near Dravegny, about two and one-half miles north of Coulonges, with American infantry close behind, while another detachment of mounted French troops opened the way a short distance to the west, with French in-

fantry and American troops following closely. The penetration by French and Americans to the region of Dravegny placed them only a scant eight miles southwest of Fismes, midway on the railroad between Soissons and Reims. Westward the French reached the southern borders of the Loupeigne, Mareuil, and Aiguzt woods and French cavalry the southern borders of the Moines wood. The swiftest fighting encountered by the Americans was in a little piece of ground east of Chamery, where the body of Lieutenant Quentin Roosevelt had been buried by the Germans after his airplane was brought down. Through wheat-fields and over wooded trails soaked with rain, the Americans moved cautiously, but almost continuously, over farms and past villages. To the westward another force of Americans moved steadily through and around the Nesles Woods and rolling country to the east. The French were meeting with similar success east and west.

The German retirement now resembled a rout. Its great feature was the squeezing in of both sides of the shallow salient. News more inspiriting had not come since Foch struck the blow that robbed the Germans of the initiative in a day and sent them reeling off in the midst of their supreme effort. The blow which Ludendorff had been staving off for two weeks had fallen upon him like an avalanche. His west wall was crumbling, and when that wall collapsed the rest of the salient was to go with it. Soissons and the Crise valley heights were the key to the Vesle valley. With them lost, all excuse vanished for trying to hold on to Braisne and Fismes. Ludendorff's failure to hold his line probably convinced him of the futility of further efforts to camouflage his defeat. He had staged a "strategic withdrawal" to the Ourcq and had established new lines there, which the German people were asked to consider as advantageous strongholds for future strategic purposes on or beyond the Marne. Reluctant as he was to cut his losses, he now made clear confession of his failure and hurried back to a position in which he could reorganize his surprized and shaken forces. The "high water-mark" of German power in this drive had been reached at Condé, five miles beyond Château-Thierry south of the Marne, as that of the Confederacy at the Bloody Angle. Never again would the Germans come as near break-

ing through the Allied defenses in France as when in March they drove westward almost to Amiens, or when they pushed their salient from the Chemin-des-Dames to and across the Marne, beyond Château-Thierry to Condé.

The Church of St. Rémi, the miracle edifice of Reims, on July 30 was fired by German incendiary shells and became a heap of smoking ruins. For four years this church, one of the few surviving churches of Roman architecture in France, had stood unscathed. Even while the cathedral was being shattered, no scratch had marred its walls, the first of which had been placed in position nine hundred years ago—in 1015. It required only a few shells to reduce this venerable temple to a flaming mass, mercifully hidden at moments from French eyes by its own smoke. St. Rémi, after whom it was named, was an archbishop, born in the ninth century. He baptized Clovis, the king of the Franks, the first among French kings to go over from heathenism to Christianity. Later he was canonized and the edifice now burned was erected in his memory. The robes worn by successive archbishops, which had been kept in the church for centuries, were saved by an intrepid French soldier under heavy shell-fire. That this destruction was deliberate was clear. The Germans knew that above ground Reims was a deserted city. German lines so surrounded the city as to give complete command of it. Shelling it could serve no military purpose.[18]

The casket containing the bones of St. Rémi had lain in the church for centuries. After the cathedral of Reims, which had figured in many of the greatest ceremonial scenes in French history, the Church of St. Rémi was the most famous spot in the martyr-city. The Germans had showered shells on it with diabolical persistence. While the bombardment was at its height, three French officers who were passing through the streets suddenly noticed that the church was on fire. One of them instantly thought of the casket containing St. Rémi's bones, the most prized religious relic, perhaps, in all France. In spite of the danger from falling timbers, they penetrated the church and reached the crypt. Here they found the elaborately gilded tomb reared in the form of a miniature cathedral, buried under the débris, but

[18] Cable dispatch from Wilbur Forrest to The *Tribune* (New York).

still unharmed. By herculean effort they succeeded in lifting the casket on their shoulders and conveyed it to the roadway in front of the church. Subsequently it was placed on a military wagon and taken to Châlons, where it was handed over to the custody of the Bishop of that see.

On August 3 the Allied armies reached the line of the Vesle, the French on the left marching to the south bank of the Aisne with Germans in full retreat toward the north, Foch's armies hurling them back from three to seven miles along the thirty-one mile front from Soissons to Reims, capturing fifty towns and great numbers of prisoners. For twenty miles east of Soissons the Allied forces had reached the river, where the Germans hoped to make a new stand, hotly pursuing them with cavalry and tanks. The banks of the Aisne were reached from Pommiers, west of Soissons, to Venizel, east of it. Cavalry patrols arrived at the Vesle near Champigny and Jonchery, finding all the bridges cut or burned. West of Reims the Allies reached or were approaching Tinqueux and Rosnay, in the neighborhood of the main road to Reims. Fires were illuminating the skies everywhere, the enemy burning everything as he retreated. More than forty conflagrations were counted during one night. French cavalry were preparing to cross the Vesle, the Germans having given up all idea of making a stand there, and now retreating north with precipitation. Soissons was occupied an hour after the Germans were driven from its suburbs. Those of the garrison not captured escaped by fleeing northward.

A measure of the success of the Allies was indicated in an official statement that they had found it "seemingly impossible" to estimate the number of guns and shells abandoned by the Germans. The retirement had developed into a race of hard-prest German hordes to find a breathing-spot beyond the Aisne. Northwest of Reims, Foch's forces, in the face of desperate resistance, advanced beyond the Vesle, and were strongly attacking La Meuvillete. Franco-Americans occupied Fismes, the chief German base on the Vesle. French cavalry west of Reims pushed across the stream at many points. The number of prisoners taken by Allied forces during the constantly accelerating retreat of the Crown

Prince, would "thrill the world," said a dispatch from the battle-front. Elsewhere the Germans had retreated on the Avre, between Montdidier and Moreuil, on a front of approximately ten miles, giving up the slopes on the west bank of the river. British patrols had gained the Ancre over a front of six miles, hard on the heels of the retiring foe.

One had only to look at the map to see that the distance traversed by the Americans since July 18 was the furthest distance that had been covered by any soldiers except the retreating Germans. On the morning of the 18th Americans had started from the trenches northwest of Château-Thierry, south of it and east of it. From Belleau to Fismes, where our men stood on August 3, the distance was about forty kilometers, which had been gained in fifteen days. Fourteen kilometers of that distance had been covered in two days. Ludendorff, in his report of his retreat, said:

"The enemy evaded us on July 15, and we thereupon, as early as the evening of the 16th, broke off operations. It is always our endeavor to stop an undertaking as soon as the stake is not worth the cost. I consider it one of my principal duties to spare the blood and strength of our soldiers. Foch's plan was undoubtedly to cut off the entire arc of our front south of the Aisne by a break-through on the flank. But with the proved leadership of our Seventh and Ninth Armies that was quite impossible. We reckoned on an attack on July 18 and were prepared for it. The enemy experienced very heavy losses, and the Americans and African auxiliary troops, which we do not underestimate, suffered severely. By the afternoon of the 19th we already were fully masters of the situation and shall remain so. We left the abandoned ground to the enemy according to our regular plan. 'Gain of ground' and 'Marne' are only catchwords without importance for the issue of the war. We are now, as before, confident."

German psychology as here disclosed, was a curiosity. In the field of politics and morals the German mind worked differently from other minds. Even in the science of war, there were curious kinks in the German intellect, here beautifully demonstrated in the alibi, "the enemy evaded us," which Ludendorff tried to frame for his defeat. He may not have meant all he said, but in essentials he probably spoke from the heart. To the German war-machine every-

thing happened in accordance with a prearranged plan. If things went well they went "according to plan"; if they did not go well, they also went "according to plan." Nothing could happen which the prescient intelligence of the Great General Staff had not foreseen. Ludendorff's explanation of his failure put him in a worse light than the explanation offered in his behalf by Allied military critics, who said he was taken completely by surprize, and that, considering the position he was in when the attack came, he extricated himself skilfully and at a minimum cost. But it was *"verboten"* to any German strategist to admit that he ever was or could be taken by surprize. Ludendorff lacked the moral courage to violate an unwritten German law. He therefore pretended that he had anticipated Foch's attack, that he had "reckoned on an attack on July 18 and was prepared for it," which was preposterous on its face. Had he expected the Franco-American offensive, he would have put his right wing in a condition to resist it, and successful resistance would have enabled him to push with vigor his offensive toward Epernay and Châlons. Foch would then have wasted his reserves on the west side of the salient, and would have been unable to use them to check Ludendorff's progress up the Marne.

Ludendorff tried to conceal, at the expense of his military capacity, the essential cause of the miscarriage of the German campaign. It collapsed, just as the campaign for Paris in 1914 collapsed, because of German over-confidence, because of the General Staff's unwillingness to credit any Allied staff with capacity or judgment equal to its own. The younger Moltke worked according to prearranged plans, and Joffre upset those plans. But Germany had never yet acknowledged that Moltke lost in 1914 because he undervalued Joffre's generalship. So now Ludendorff would not acknowledge that he had lost because he underestimated Foch's generalship. Ludendorff's situation was one which he had foreseen as one of the possibilities in the fortune of war and had provided for. To this extent he was telling the truth. He had really made two plans—one for success, one for failure. So that whatever might happen he would be acting "according to plan."

Wherever the German war-machine had gone it had left

a slimy trail behind. Villages were found battered and burned, fields made into a lacework of shell-holes, forests mangled and uprooted, roads pitted. Over all clung the odor of death, gray-clad bodies of Prussian Guards who remained to fight rear-guard actions, German helmets as thick as daisies. North of Fère-en-Tardenois one passed mile after mile of ashes and débris where the Germans had burned stores they could not remove, every conceivable kind of war-material except food. There were great piles of ammunition partly burned, clothing, wagons, and truck-parts, tons of machine-gun ammunition, airplane parts, and all sorts of stores. The Germans had built a narrow-gage railroad into the salient. Stored on cars and along the tracks were enough rails to extend the line to Bordeaux, as if they had planned to build a system to Paris. In one field were ashes of big hangars, the wreckage of a dozen machines, and about twenty big aerial bombs such as were dropt on Paris. The dimensions of the pile showed that as many more had been burned.

In this territory were discovered perhaps 100 machine-gun nests with wreckage of guns and dead Germans. Many machine-gun emplacements had been prepared but never used. One château-wall had at least 100 holes prepared for the use of these weapons, but no stand was made there. The Germans left the wheat-fields about Château-Thierry unmolested, but those south of the Vesle were stript, the wheat harvested and taken away by trucks. Captured German documents showed that instructions had been given for the harvesting of this grain, which must have amounted to hundreds of thousands of bushels. In villages the Germans destroyed everything they could and took away all food. Much German material was burned, but the Allies salvaged supplies worth more than $5,000,000. Heaps of ammunition were found abandoned and unspoiled, and tanks stranded. Artillery-shells and filled cartridges were not easily burned, and remained a heavy loss to the Germans, a blow that would reduce their fighting power. Preparations for the last German offensive in 1918 had required a full month's delay, but the product was now used up or lost, and with it no small amount of permanent war-material. Another month could hardly replace it.

According to the Berlin *Tageblatt*, news of the German defeat "produced scenes of unspeakable despair" in Berlin. "Such outbreaks of utter discouragement and downheartedness" had not been witnessed there since the war began. A wild report current in Berlin was that the Kaiser and Hindenburg had been murdered. Police posted placards threatening with severe penalties those responsible for repeating such panic-stricken tales. The *Frankische Tageblatt* deplored the circulation of these stories as betraying "a dangerous nervousness on the part of the people." Whatever explanations Ludendorff might put out, the average German knew that the "Friedenssturm" had collapsed, that German armies had been defeated and that no hope remained for the promised military decision that was to bring peace. By the very nature of things, such a defeat was bound to produce "unspeakable scenes of despair"—the inevitable reaction from the condition of complete confidence which the General Staff had created throughout Germany. That the General Staff had failed in its undertaking was due to two things: one was the unified command under Foch, and the other the miracle accomplished by the British and American Governments in transporting a million American troops to France since the German offensive began. This was something for which neither the German General Staff nor the German public was prepared, and the effect upon the German morale once it was realized was not easily overestimated. Just as popular confidence ran high from March 21 to the middle of July, when there had not been a serious German reverse to report, so popular depression and discouragement became correspondingly great when the German people understood what had happened to their latest dream of a peace of conquest.

German resistance along the Vesle had stiffened, but American patrols were across the river at many points on either side of Fismes. This town, which was desperately contested for, was now solidly ours, won after a series of attacks, the fierceness of which was commented on in German *communiqués*. American troops stormed its heaps of ruins, throwing their old foemen, the 4th Prussian Guard Division, back across the stream amid the broken stones that

were once the homes of Fismes people. Across the Vesle our patrols engaged in weeding out machine-gunners hidden in clumps of bushes near the stream. On August 6 French and American troops forced the passage of the Vesle along a front between Braisne and Fismes, and held the highway paralleling the river in the face of furious German counter-attacks. American machine-gunners protecting a place west of Fismes wiped out an entire battalion of German infantrymen and machine-gunners. The Germans at the same time

BRITISH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

A FRENCH TANK WAITING TO GO INTO ACTION

were getting into position to attack American bridge-builders. Some material already had been moved to the south bank of the river, and the Germans, apparently discovering this fact, had sent a battalion to a hill position to prevent the Americans from carrying out their plan. Before they arrived, however, some crack American machine-gunners took up a higher position commanding the place and opened fire when the Germans appeared. Observers did not see a single German get away from the leaden hail that descended upon

them. Not even enemy stretcher-bearers approached the scene. The Germans replied so feebly that there were no American casualties. Fismes had been held by a German regiment with a special machine-gun detachment. This force formed part of the reserves of Crown Prince Rupprecht's armies. Their best men had been killed and replacements were made from reserve divisions of young men. The majority of prisoners taken were between 18 and 20 years old.

Probably the most important result of Foch's thrust, aside from regaining the initiative, recovering French territory and wiping out the menace to Paris, was the effective depletion that took place in German man-power. Since July 15 Ludendorff had used no less, and probably more than 750,000 men, of whom 75,000 would never fire another shot. More than 40,000 were prisoners. Tens of thousands were buried in the Reims-Soissons pocket, or were lying in German hospitals, permanently maimed. In some places the country was still covered with German dead, the French and Americans having had no time to bury them. Reports received from Switzerland were that long trains behind German lines were bearing wounded men to already congested hospitals. In man-power alone the Allies had dealt the enemy a staggering blow from which he could not recover. German power had passed its zenith months before, while daily, almost hourly, since then, the Allied strength had been growing as every American troopship touched the shores of Europe.

When Ludendorff confest that the Allies had found a way to "evade" the German blow and to counter with another even more powerful blow, he wrote *"Finis"* on the great German western offensive. There might be other tapering-down efforts by the Germans to break through somewhere in France. The Crown Prince of Bavaria might want to try again after the Crown Prince of Prussia had so pitifully failed. But the prestige of the German method was gone. Its power, too, was gone. The Hutier shock-system had been the chief asset behind Germany's bid for a decision this year. When it no longer worked, another offensive became only an empty privilege in German hands. Foch was only an "evader" in Ludendorff's eyes, but the results of his great

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FRENCH TANKS OF THE NEWER TYPE

victory were secure. The hands on the German time-clock for 1918 had been turned a long way back. Ludendorff could regain the initiative only on conditions which would make him pause and think, for a German offensive on any other sector of the line might easily prove, under the changed aspect of things, another boomerang. It might repeat the fatal misadventure which Germans now associated with what had become for them the most odious of all military catch-words—the Marne.

One thing was plain, and the subtleties of the German Staff could not conceal it: The Crown Prince's army had been beaten in every conceivable form of warfare by French, British, Italians, and Americans. The forces under the heir to the Imperial throne had been driven from trenches, strongholds, and natural positions easily adaptable for defense. They had been driven across open country in retreat, and their counter-attacks, skilfully organized and remorselessly pushed, had been repelled. They had been outfought and outtricked; their retirement had been altered to a precipitate retreat, and in some hearts the hope began to unfold that before the end was reached the word "rout" might properly be on the lips of the Allies. It would not do to say that German plans on other parts of the line would be gravely affected by the Crown Prince's defeat; but they had been dislocated, if not rendered impracticable. All the labor that went into their preparation had been for nothing. At the same time the moral effect at home and in the army called for consideration. The troops and the civil population had been told that the French were bled white, that the Americans were useless, the British negligible, but the truth could not be long hidden from them. Germans might take it either way they wished: that their troops were inferior to bled white, useless, negligible troops, or that their rulers had lied to them.

Americans felt that they might refrain from bragging of the work they had thus far done, since others were bragging for them. Lloyd George said, as respects the military situation on the Western Front, that it had come down to "a race between Hindenburg and Wilson," and the universal testimony was that Wilson had won. Both French and

British agreed that the arrival of more than a million American soldiers in France had redressed the balance of numbers, and assured to Foch ample reserves. To this the enemy bore reluctant witness. The officially inspired and often repeated German account had been that American troops would not be sent to France; that, if they did sail, they would be sunk on the way by German *U*-boats; that they could not cross the Atlantic because they could neither fly nor swim across; that if any American soldiers did succeed in getting through, they would be of such inferior, poorly trained material that they would amount to nothing in a military sense.

But now in the larger aspects of America's share in the war, more than one German newspaper was confessing that, if numbers were to win the war, the United States was contributing to the Allies the necessary margin of man-power. What America was doing and sacrificing, however, did not lead in thoughtful American minds to any feeling of foolish complacency. We had not yet been cut to the bone as Great Britain had been, nor made to know by experience the anguish of heart which had made heroic France forever beautiful in our eyes. In the future much heavier burdens would be laid upon this country. They certainly would be if war went on for another year. What we needed most was not to nourish our pride on what we had already accomplished, but to brace our minds and steel our wills for what remained to be done. The aim of the nation was clear and its determination fixt—to do and bear all that might be necessary to achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace.

On August 6 the French Council of Ministers promoted Ferdinand Foch to be a Marshal of France. They also conferred the Military Medal upon Pétain. President Poincaré presided. The most ancient and highest military honor which the Republic of France could bestow was therefore Foch's. It antedated both the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor and the Military Medal. For over forty years no one had received a Marshal's baton in France, until it was given to Joffre in December, 1916. It was then a somewhat tardy reward for the soldier who had conceived and fought the first battle of the Marne, but the delay was due to influences which prevailed in the Briand Ministry in the first year of

the war that feared a military dictatorship. Now Foch, whose strategy in the first battle of the Marne was as dramatic as it was effectual, had also received a baton for winning what was usually called the Second Marne battle, and for having saved, at least in the popular mind, Paris a second time. The office of Marshal has been traced to the same source as that of Constable. As Masters of the Horse in charge of the royal stables, the Constables had Marshals as auxiliaries who remained under their orders only to assume full responsibility when the Constables were appointed to the command of the armies. Step by step the office of Marshal was more precisely defined until the reign of Francis I (1515-47), when the first Marshals of France were created—nominated for life and honored with the title, "Cousins of the King."

On August 4, the fourth anniversary of Great Britain's declaration of war against Germany, no man knew exactly when and where the three and twenty Entente Allies would win the war, but all men knew when and where the German military power had lost it. Four years before, on the morning of August 4, at a point near Gemmenich, a village southwest of Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany lost the war when her first gray uniform crossed the frontier from Germany into Belgium. An hour before and it would not have been too late for Germany to win the war, or at least to lose it with honor, but an hour afterward, Germany was doomed. What had befallen her since that 4th if August, what would befall her in the future, were predetermined from the instant of that fatal summer morning when the first German soldier trod where Prussia had promised he would never go. There was not one German killed in this war whose fate had not been written at Gemmenich. It was not merely that the invasion of a land guaranteed perpetual neutrality had brought Great Britain into the fight and turned into a world war what Germany had hoped would be a small, swift, and easy campaign, it was the exposure made of Prussianized Germany herself. Before that step the world had thought of Germany otherwise, for she had thrown successfully about herself a mantle which hid her sword and her thick, studded boots, had worked at science and played at art, had sung

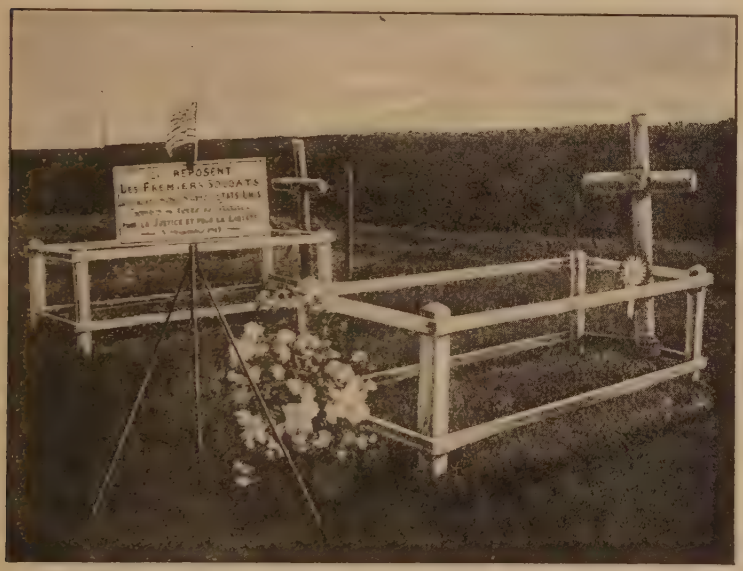
songs and thumped the piano, cleaned streets admirably and washed children's faces. Many believed her efficient and that her very "*Verboten*" signs were guides to an ideal life. Even the Kaiser, when he reviewed his armies, talked of peace as if it were the first object of his life. But Gemmenich had shown that what we had thought to be only a stout, amiable, and moral lady playing the piano, was really a bestial old Prussian worshiping his sword.

The great German Empire, intensively trained in the arts of war for forty years, was seen pleading cowardice in extenuation of her broken word to Belgium. "France could wait; we could not!" said her Chancellor—that is, she was to invade Belgium because she feared that, on a fair field, France would beat her. Prince Lichnowsky had told her the truth about England, but she would not believe him. In years of Kultur Prussianized Germany had forgotten what honor was, had chosen to credit stories that England was torn with dissensions, threatened with rebellion in Ireland and India, nervous from labor troubles, physically unprepared for war, and mentally and morally unfit for it. Even the telegrams of Sir Edward Grey, communicated to her on the day Belgium was invaded, did not dispel her illusion about Great Britain. Prussianized Germany's dawning tragedy was not merely that she had revealed herself to the world, but that she had revealed herself to herself. The moving-picture of Kultur, which she had unreeled before our innocent eyes, had disappeared forever, and we had revealed before us the picture of Germany as she was, the unmasked Prussian setting forth to outrage and murder, to bind and burn, to commit rape, impose slavery, and torture the innocent. All the world had watched the procession of horror for four years and against all its ingrained faith in human nature, had learned that it was dealing as with a tiger in a jungle.

As to the American Divisions employed in Foch's counter-offensive, Colonel Frederick Palmer gave to the public after the armistice was signed, some interesting details.[19] The First, Second, and Twenty-sixth were attacking on July 18th. The Twenty-sixth had had a hard two months in the Toul

[19] "America in France" (Dodd, Mead & Co.).

sector, where it had held more front than the First, which it had relieved; and had met at Seicheprey the first serious attack which our army received. After a short rest, it had been sent to the Marne salient to take over the sector in which the Second Division had won its spurs at Vaux and Belleau Wood. This sector was still active. The Twenty-sixth had experienced two weeks of strain when ordered to attack on July 18 in the movement toward Soissons. Its right, resting at Vaux, was to take the villages of Torcy and




GRAVES OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN FRANCE

The French inscription reads: "Here lie the first soldiers of the illustrious republic of the United States, who fell on French soil for justice and liberty, November 3, 1917"

Belleau and advance its line on the left of Bouresches. For eight days the Twenty-sixth was actively engaged, always under fire. Under sniping from riflemen, machine-gun fire, and persistent artillery-fire, the Forty-second relieved the Twenty-sixth. On the 29th another division, the Thirty-second, from Michigan and Wisconsin, under General W. G. Haan, after service in a quiet trench-sector, made an abrupt entry into a volent attack. From the way in which the

Wisconsin and Iowa men of the Forty-second charged the heights of the Ourcq, "it would appear," said Colonel Palmer, "that when these two States make war it is of no pacific variety." The men from Milwaukee "were peculiarly belligerent." The Thirty-second took the place of the Third Division, which "closed its brilliant service with a final burst of energy in advancing on Ronchères Wood." When a week later the Thirty-second entered Fismes, it was relieved by the Twenty-eighth. Another change occurred when the Seventy-seventh, from New York City, which had been training at the British front and then went to Alsace, was brought to the Vesle to relieve the Fourth. It was composed of men of all races and religions—men who mainly had known only city lodgings and city streets, East-Siders who had been developed from puny conditions to robust virility in a year's time.

General Degoutte said of the work done at Château-Thierry and in the fighting north of it by the Americans: "I couldn't have done better with my Moroccans"—a reference to the Moroccan troops that he had long commanded in Africa, and who had been called "one of the glories of the French army." On July 18, at half-past four in the morning, they had attacked with vigor. Torcy was carried in an hour, Givry occupied, and the railway reached. Then Epieds and Trugny were taken by storm, and the road from Jaulgonne to Fère-en-Tardenois was reached. Between Château-Thierry and Jaulgonne, the Germans were stopt short after a difficult maneuver under heavy fire. Two days later Jaulgonne, Chartèves, and Mont-St. Père were taken. Stiff fighting then followed on wooded hills above Charmel, but in the night of the 25th the Americans overran the village, and when dawn came were masters of the hill. On the 27th they reached the source of the Ourcq. Another division, largely made up of regiments from Wisconsin, among them many German-Americans, went into action at Bouchères on July 30 and fought its way steadily in the direction of Fismes, reaching the place on August 5. Another push forward took the Americans to Fismes, and the Vesle. Altho the Germans held Fismes in force, the Americans kept up a steady fire with field-mortars and some 37-mm. guns. Fighting was

from house to house, but when night fell again the Germans only held the northern end of the village, and next day were driven across the Vesle. The division in six days had fought its way successfully for 18 kilometers, ending with taking Fismes by assault. Of fighting on the crossing of the Vesle, Colonel Henry Hodge, the American bridge-building engineer, returning home after the war, said it was a most difficult work for an army to peform because, altho the Vesle is a narrow and shallow river, the Germans had filled its bed with barbed wire. Before the Americans had completed the work of crossing 10,000 men had been lost on this front.[20]

[20] Principal Sources: The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, General Ludendorff's report of his retreat, Reuter dispatches, William L. McPherson in The New York *Tribune;* The *Sun*, The *Evening Post*, The *Tribune*, New York.

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LIEUT. FRANK LUKE, JR.

For conspicuous gallantry in action, Luke, an American aviator who lost his life in the war with a score of 18, was accorded the Congressional Medal of Honor

## IV

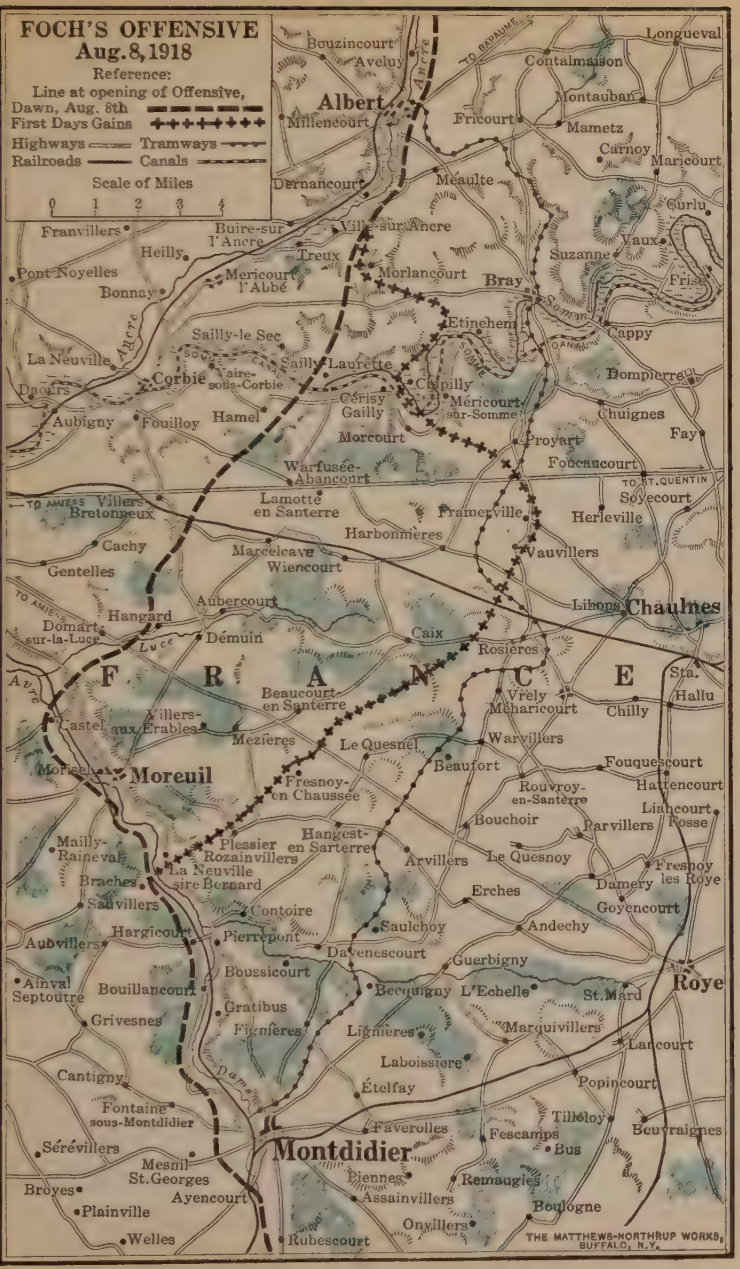
## THE ALBERT-MONTDIDIER SALIENT WIPED OUT AND PÉRONNE, ROYE AND NOYON RECOVERED —FOCH'S BLOW WITH HIS "LEFT FIST"

August 3, 1918—August 27, 1918

ON August 8 Foch struck the Germans another staggering blow, this time using "his left fist." Realizing that the German Crown Prince's forces were still groggy, as pugilists might say, from the blow which knocked them out of the Marne pocket, and that the divisions borrowed by him from the Bavarian Crown Prince had not been returned, he seized an opportunity to smash into the Albert-Montdidier salient. British and French troops in one day penetrated to a maximum of seven and one-half miles, and along a twenty-mile front for an average of five, carrying their objectives and taking so many prisoners that counting them was characterized in a dispatch from the front as "a difficult task." In the House of Commons Bonar Law said the British had taken more than 7,000 men and 100 guns. The infantry attack was begun after an artillery preparation notably brief, an unusual number of tanks leading the way. From his reverses here, Ludendorff, in 1919, dated his conviction that Germany could no longer hope to win the war. It was a decisive action, he said, "because of the ease with which the enemy broke through our line." [20a]

Preparations for this drive had been made by Foch under cover of darkness, and so successful were his concentrations that the Germans remained unaware that a drive in great force had been launched until the whole front was ablaze with artillery and swarming with tanks, machine-guns, and infantrymen. Objectives were carried in the first rush, the Germans fleeing pell-mell after the tanks got their bristling muzzles into position. Practically all the ground was of an open nature, which greatly facilitated the use of tanks.

[20a] Interview with a Berlin correspondent of The *World* (New York).


FOCH'S OFFENSIVE
Aug. 8, 1918
Reference:
Line at opening of Offensive, Dawn, Aug. 8th
First Days Gains
Highways
Railroads
Tramways
Canals
Scale of Miles
0 1 2 3 4
Albert
Bray
Montdidier
Roye
Chaulnes
Moreuil
Corbie
Bouzincourt
Aveluy
Millencourt
Dernancourt
Fricourt
Méaulte
Contalmaison
Longueval
Montauban
Mametz
Carnoy
Maricourt
Curlu
Franvillers
Buire-sur-l'Ancre
Heilly
Treux
Ville-sur-Ancre
Suzanne
Vaux
Frise
Pont-Noyelles
Mericourt-l'Abbé
Morlancourt
Bonnay
Etinehem
Cappy
Sailly-le-Sec
La Neuville
Sailly-Laurette
Chipilly
Dompierre
Daours
Vaire-sous-Corbie
Cérisy
Gailly
Méricourt-sur-Somme
Chuignes
Aubigny
Fouilloy
Hamel
Morcourt
Proyart
Fay
Warfusée-Abancourt
Foucaucourt
Lamotte-en-Santerre
Soyecourt
Villers-Bretonneux
Framerville
Herleville
Cachy
Harbonnières
Marcelcave
Wiencourt
Vauvillers
Gentelles
Aubercourt
Hangard
Domart-sur-la-Luce
Démuin
Caix
Libons
Rosières
Beaucourt-en-Santerre
Vrely
Méharicourt
Chilly
Hallu
Villers-aux-Erables
Mezières
Le Quesnel
Warvillers
Beaufort
Fouquescourt
Fresnoy-en-Chaussée
Rouvroy-en-Santerre
Hattencourt
Liancourt
Bouchoir
Parvillers
Rosse
Mailly-Raineval
Plessier-Rozainvillers
Hangest-en-Santerre
Arvillers
Le Quesnoy
Fresnoy-les-Roye
La Neuville-sire-Bernard
Braches
Erches
Damery
Sauvillers
Contoire
Goyencourt
Hargicourt
Pierrepont
Saulchoy
Andechy
Aubvillers
Davenescourt
Guerbigny
Ainval
Septoutre
Boussicourt
Bouillancourt
Becquigny
L'Echelle
St. Mard
Gratibus
Grivesnes
Fignières
Ligniéres
Marquivillers
Lancourt
Laboissière
Cantigny
Ételfay
Popincourt
Fontaine-sous-Montdidier
Faverolles
Tilloloy
Beuvraignes
Sérévillers
Fescamps
Bus
Mesnil-St. Georges
Piennes
Remaugies
Broyes
Ayencourt
Assainvillers
Boulogne
Plainville
Onvillers
Welles
Rubescourt
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

Rain had fallen but when dawn broke a heavy mist remained and so screened the tanks that they were able to gather headway before the Germans saw them. When the weather cleared, observers in captive balloons reported that great caravans of wagons and motor-trucks could be seen on the horizon scurrying north and east as fast as they could go. German troops in all this section were commanded by Crown Prince Rupprecht, but the main Allied attack was directed against an army immediately under Hutier. The first day's gains were the greatest ever made in an offensive on the Western Front since trench-warfare began.

Haig's advance was made from Morlancourt, south of Albert, to Plessier-Rozainville, between Moreuil and Montdidier. At daybreak Rawlinson's Fourth Army had gone over the top after only three minutes of artillery preparation. Many tanks, including some of the speedy "whippets," did great execution, and cavalry and motor machine-gun batteries also proved effective. No enemy airplanes appeared for several hours—Germany's supply had been greatly depleted in recent fighting. After the first objectives were reached, a pause ensued and then the Allies plunged forward again in an advance that continued through the day. Only at the north end of the line was enemy resistance effective. When nightfall came a wedge had been driven in which seriously threatened German positions north and south. In this stroke, as in Foch's in the Marne salient, the German military power was shaken in its tradition of invincibility, but not actually defeated. It could still, as Lloyd George said, "clank its sword on the council table and boast that all the armies in the world had been unable to beat it back to the Rhine." There remained to be demonstrated the existence of a power making for peace that was greater than the Prussian power making for war. "And when you have demonstrated even to the enemy that such a power does exist," said Lloyd George, "durable peace will come, but no sooner."

Haig was making a new and formidable demonstration of that power in Picardy. He had shot a bolt out of the blue like that with which, just three weeks before, Pétain had smashed the exposed right between Soissons and Château-Thierry. In

one day Haig had attained objectives which put him on the flank and rear of German forces, holding the lower part of the old Montdidier salient and the smaller salient created early in June by the third German drive, from Lassigny to Compiègne. His initial success was even greater than the initial success of the Franco-American drive on July 18. It needed only to be driven in and widened to the south in order to put in peril the whole German line from Montdidier to La Fère. His definite objective was the north-and-south railroad from Albert to Montdidier which was the main rear supply-line of the Germans below the Somme and a vital line of communication between the Germans below Amiens and those below Lassigny and Noyon. Haig seemed to have caught Ludendorff asleep. There was no reason why Ludendorff should not have been prepared. He had seen for four or five weeks the same preliminary Entente activities on this front as had occurred on the west side of the Marne salient. But when the blow came his lines collapsed; his armies instead of retiring slightly to prepare positions, hurriedly fled. Foch's strategy was the strategy Foch delighted in—an exposed salient which gave him ample opportunity to practise his theory of an economical offensive. German official reports merely said that "in an attack by the English between the Ancre and the Avre, the enemy forced his way into our positions. On both sides of the Lys we drove back partial thrusts. North of the Somme the enemy were repulsed," which was scarcely an account of what had taken place in the Albert-Montdidier salient, almost a decisive action.

The British on the first day had gone further than the Crown Prince's army went in May in its rush south from the Chemin-des-Dames. The second day found their line nearly twelve miles beyond the starting-point. What was notable about the advance was that it had followed closely the German tactics of driving in a narrow wedge and then flattening the wedge out at its apex. It pointed southwest and so directly threatened a break through in the rear of the fast narrowing German salient toward Montdidier. The third great salient which the Germans had created by their unexpected success was threatened with collapse. Just as Joffre in September, 1914, and Foch in July, 1918, drove

the Germans north from the Marne by unloosing a threat against their right wing along the Ourcq, so there was now developing against the German right a threat whose effects might reach far north of the Aisne. Seventeen thousand prisoners and between 200 and 300 cannon were captured.

Unofficial reports said that cavalry had reached the neighborhood of Chaulnes, which was nearly thirteen miles beyond the old line. Cavalry and fast tanks operated miles in front of advancing infantry, creating havoc among the retreating

FRENCH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

ALL THAT IS LEFT OF CHAULNES

Germans, cutting up trains, killing thousands and taking many prisoners. Clouds of airmen rained bombs on convoys until many roads became impassable from the wreckage. Other airmen blew up bridges over the Somme, across which the enemy was trying to flee. The Germans destroyed great piles of shells and abandoned stores of materials. Confessing weakness, they withdrew in Flanders, on the southwestern side of the Lys salient, 2,000 yards on a six-mile front. North of Kemmel Hill the British advanced on a 2,000-yard front. Americans—the Twenty-seventh Division, and per-

haps the Thirtieth—brigaded with the British, were participating in this offensive. On August 8 sixty-five German airplanes were destroyed by British aviators or driven down out of control, and fifty British machines were missing—the British losses being due chiefly to fire from the ground.

The Allies soon passed the north-and-south railroad coming down from Albert, and were close to the next north-and-south railroad coming down from Péronne to Chaulnes, the two chief feeders of German positions east of Montdidier, Along the Lys the enemy were thrown back four miles over a front of ten. Morlancourt was captured after resistance which lasted through the first day and night of the attack, and well into the second. The French advanced nearly nine miles in their part of the salient. Despite weather conditions not ideal for air-fighting, aviators played an important part in the offensive. By flying close to the ground, they attacked machine-guns. Others bombarded German emplacements behind the lines, destroyed bridges, killed horses and wrecked transports. Airmen on returning to hangars reported the German retreat as general, that lines of lorries could be seen behind their lines speeding away with what materials they had been able to gather hastily. They burned supplies in preference to having them fall into the hands of the Allies. By having to conduct two actions at the same time, Crown Prince Rupprecht had to face the gravest problem of his career, for if he sent troops to Picardy, there was danger of a clean "break through" in Flanders, and if he tried to stop the advance in the north, Franco-British forces in Picardy would take advantage of spots uncovered in front of them.

French and British military critics were jubilant over the success achieved, largely because of the new spirit that had been injected into the Allied troops. The moral effect of Americans in France, not only in this salient, but in the Marne salient and before Verdun, had almost transformed the morale of British and French armies. Instead of having merely a brave determination to resist, they now fought with confidence in victory. Every hour after the attack opened increased the magnitude of the event. Rawlinson's divisions, with the French on their right, in two days reached positions from which they threatened the whole German line south of

the Avre. The situation bore a general resemblance to that brought about by Mangin's drive at the enemy's exposed flanks in the Marne salient three weeks before. A large and heavily equipped force was in danger of being cut off in an awkward salient, and was compelled, unless the position could be restored, to make the best of its way out of a pocket. The Germans before Amiens were in a fatal dilemma; they could only maintain themselves in their chosen vantage-ground by efforts which would desperately weaken them elsewhere. Less than a month before, the German Command, with every advantage at its disposal, had given Foch his opportunity. Now its whole campaign was in confusion and along with gravest losses in men, material, positions, and prestige, had suffered the worst loss of all—that of the initiative.

The attack east of Amiens differed in one important respect from the memorable stroke of July 18. It was not in the nature of a counter-blow delivered on a weak flank at the crisis of a battle; it was an unprovoked frontal drive at a line which the Germans had heavily held, and had occupied four months. They had expected that an attack would be attempted here and so it redounded all the more to the credit of the Entente generalship employed that there should have been complete surprize, and that the initial success won should have been so great. The surprize lay in the moment selected for the stroke; the success was one of rapidity, attained by carefully organized tactical methods, in which cavalry, fast tanks, armored-cars, and aeroplanes played leading parts. All accounts told with many quaint details of the enemy's total unpreparedness; and it stirred the blood to hear, after many months of misfortune and hope deferred, of the rising spirit of all the troops engaged, of guns pressing hard on the heels of infantry, of cavalry deploying at the gallop to cut off Germans in flight, and of a sky alive with airmen bombing every road, screening tanks with smoke bombs, and piloting them to points where they could be of most service.

The Americans played a part, if a small one, in the great battle. Their forward dash took place on August 9, in the light of a setting sun, after difficult marching and counter-

marching, and after isolated fighting with machine-guns along the Somme. Trained here in the Haig school, they proved as effective fighting men as other Americans trained elsewhere by French poilus. Compared with the Americans who fought on the Marne, the Ourcq, and the Vesle, their numbers were few, but the quality of their work was testified to by every Tommy one met. They pushed toward Bray-sur-Somme, reaching objectives and holding them firmly, giving Württembergers who opposed them such a drubbing that their only attempt at a counter-attack was small forays by patrols who were beaten off. They captured three six-inch howitzers, a couple of field-guns and some machine-guns. In the ground taken the main point was the Chipilly spur northeast of the village of that name, lying on the north bank of the Somme, rising to some 275 feet and dominating the country. Its capture was preceded by the taking of Chipilly itself. The Americans experienced their greatest trouble with machine-gunners, of whom the village was full, but they managed to encircle and kill many of the crews. In their advance they were preceded by tanks, which helped greatly in dealing with the machine-guns.

Amiens was now entirely free from the German menace lately so near its gates. Amiens was different from Château-Thierry. It was a much larger place, about the size of Newark. Except for its great cathedral, it lacked the beauty of the city on the Marne. Many of its buildings were of red brick, giving it a modern appearance. But the startling thing about it now was that it was a city of the dead. All its windows were boarded up, its shops barred, its houses closed and shrouded in dust that had not been disturbed in months. Not a civilian was to be seen. The cathedral, altho hit several times by shells, had not been irreparably ruined. It would not be long before its people could again call Amiens their home.[21]

While the Germans were far from being beaten, it was beginning to appear that they had ceased to be reckoned with as an offensive power. No one could be positive as to just what plans the German General Staff might have for the remainder of the year. There was much fanfare as to some

[21] Cable dispatch from Thomas M. Johnson to the *Evening Sun* (New York).

grandiose purpose, but all this was taken at heavy discount. It was recalled again and again that Hindenburg had said he was going to be in Paris by April 1, somewhere else by another arbitrary date, and at another place on some later day. Hindenburg had named August as the month when the Germans would have peace. No matter what plans they made, they had been frustrated. It was practically certain now that, except as a defensive measure. Germany could never launch another great attack. The privilege of planning had been taken from her and rested entirely with Foch. It was for him to launch great offensives and for the Germans to try to stop them. This and this only was to be the German rôle henceforth until the German army surrendered or was destroyed. Following the French on the Marne, the British had turned the tables. Hutier himself commanded one of the German armies in the Montdidier salient, but his line had now been shattered by his own surprize-tactics and by British tanks and infantry aided by British cavalry. Nineteen German officers—including one general and two major-generals—had been retired because of the German breakdown in the Marne salient. How many more would go because of the still more conspicuous breakdown southeast of Amiens? was now asked.

Throwing an army against the apex of the salient southeast of Amiens, Foch on August 9 captured Montdidier, and followed up the success by smashing into the salient for an average depth of six miles on a thirteen-mile front. The attack was made from north and southeast simultaneously and resulted in the capture of many prisoners and quantities of material. The whole Allied line from Albert to the southern side of the salient had been pushed eastward, reaching its maximum distance in the neighborhood of Chaulnes. Between the Ancre and the Somme, American troops cooperated with British in capturing Morlancourt, which they held against counter-attacks. The number of German prisoners was estimated in the British official day bulletin at 24,000, but this was increased by night. The Allied victory soon developed into the greatest German disaster thus far in the war. More ground was gained on the third day than on the two previous days combined. The French began a new

movement south of Montdidier and then patrols entered Chaulnes, which was a railroad center and supply-base.

The Germans had lost almost as much material as they had gained in their striking successes earlier in the year. More than 400 guns were captured. Hutier's whole army seemed at one time in danger of capture. In three days fourteen and one-half miles were gained, two German division staffs were captured, and eleven German divisions cut to pieces. Only two divisions of reserves reached the battlefield. The Germans tried to save themselves by a hurried flight. Military critics said that they would have to retire to the Hindenburg line, but behind Hutier in his retreat was a country that had been completely devastated during the German evacuation in the spring of 1917 and again overrun during the German offensive in March, a territory which offered little opportunity for the formation of a defensive line for an army in full retreat.

The attack launched by the French south of Montdidier was an exact reproduction of the military maneuvers which brought about the final recapture of Château-Thierry on July 21. Debeney struck the Germans from Ayencourt southeastwardly toward the Oise and carried the front to a point three kilometers east of Montdidier. Montdidier was thus invested on three sides, west, south and east, and the enemy retained only one narrow means of exit. The first objective was so quickly taken that the hour of attack on the second objective had to be advanced. By noon the Germans were caught between the jaws of a vise. Converging attacks from north and south virtually encircled the town.

One of the most picturesque events in the fighting was the taking of Montdidier. When Debeney's troops entered at midday, it was defended only by machine-guns, served not by ordinary gunners, but by officers who were beginning to feel they could not depend on their men. From the first the position of the garrison was hopeless, since the tide of battle had long before rolled past the town on both sides. Humbert's attack was made under cover of secrecy. Until infantry began to advance not a gun spoke. The ammunition lorries had moved up quietly. Two minutes before the infantry started, silence was broken by a thunderous outburst

from every gun in the sector. Under cover of shells the whole attacking mass moved forward, lorries and all, and great clouds of dust thrown up by big trucks, mingling with a mist that spread over the landscape, made a screen that protected the infantry until the instant of contact with the enemy.[22]

Montdidier was found to be an incredible ruin. At first sight of the hill on which it had stood, a hundred feet above the river, a prosperous town of several thousand, it seemed merely a chalk slope scarred by shell-fire with whitish stones piled in heaps from the crest down to the river. There was neither wall nor roof to indicate a human dwelling, only mounds of rubbish that once had been houses. At the entrance of the town were fragments of twisted iron, all that was left of an important railroad. Of the station nothing, save a chaos of shattered timbers and upheaved masonry, remained. The town was a wilderness of mounds and hollows. One long piece of wall, rising fifteen feet above the surrounding wreckage, marked the site of the fine old church of St. Peter. No fighting occurred among these ruins. When the French entered the cellar-shelters where Germans had crouched for protection, they found dead Germans buried under débris. Moreuil presented an even more lamentable spectacle. The wooden framework of houses stood as bare as skeletons, with coverings of tiles or plaster rent away by shell-fire. Not a single house had escaped injury. The result was far worse than the wholesale destruction of Dormans and other villages in the Marne valley. Morizel, a tiny suburb of Moreuil, had ceased to exist. It was hardly possible to recognize the location of buildings in the enormous rubbish heaps. In Moreuil itself houses were still burning, and from time to time the thud of an explosion told of another deposit of munitions. There had been little fighting in the streets. The town fell without a struggle. Woods nearby were a jumble of shattered tree-trunks littered throughout with German ammunition-cases, a battery of six-inch guns that still turned their muzzles westward, smashed machine-guns, clothing, all sorts of equipment, and the bodies of late defenders. Shell-holes along the road and on the hillside

[22] Cable dispatch from Gerald Campbell to The *Sun* (New York).

bore eloquent witness of the destruction that had preceded the French attack.[23]

The Allied casualties, including killed, wounded and missing, where fewer than 6,000, or not more than one-fourth the number of prisoners captured. Tanks of the newer type had definitely established their reputation. The original tanks were slow, frequently got into difficulties, and often failed to fulfil the high expectations formed of them. Commanders and troops had been inclined to look upon them as broken reeds. The new ones were in every way a great advance upon their prototype. Foch's attack owed much of its success to their skilful employment in large numbers. Recent experience had shown that with tanks a long preliminary bombardment was not necessary. Haig's blow was different in nature from Pétain's in the Marne salient. The latter attacked when the Germans were deeply committed; Haig paralyzed their communications by a first advance and so made it impossible for them to develop an organized counter-attack.[24] The active phase of the battle was over by August 12, when the British Fourth Army halted on approximately the line of the old Somme front of July 1, 1916. The initiative had passed from Ludendorff to Foch.

Airmen between the Somme and Montdidier had been everywhere bombing, photographing, chasing fliers, directing the work of infantry and artillery, and playing havoc with German transport columns back of the lines. They won a share of glory probably equal to that achieved by tanks. One squadron, in addition to shooting down thirteen German fliers, wiped out three land-batteries and silenced one anti-tank gun. Two or three members of this squadron dropt bombs on a column of infantry, scattering the column and leaving 100 dead. One airman chased a railroad-train loaded with troops, circling around the train and firing machine-gun bullets into the windows while a companion dropt bombs on train and track. When the train stopt passengers swarmed out and scampered into the woods like rabbits.[25]

[23] Cable dispatch from Walter Duranty to The *Times* (New York).

[24] Cable dispatch from Gen. Sir Frederick D. Maurice to The *Times* (New York).

[25] Cable dispatch from Perry Robinson to The *Sun* (New York).

Haig's battle was another proof of the immense change that had come over the aspect of the war as a result of Pétain's blow against the German right flank in the Marne salient. Foch could now make the Germans dance to his piping. Having the initiative, the German reserves would have to run to meet his blow whenever Foch decided to strike. Within three days a blow had dislocated more than a hundred miles of German front. The entire German line from Arras to Reims was endangered. The impetus of the French attack was still almost as great as ever, with advances on a twenty-

U. S. OFFICIAL PHOTO.

GRAVES OF NURSES IN FRANCE

five-mile front at points reaching two and a half miles. Through a broken, wooded region, Hutier was making a somewhat hurried and disordered retreat. Chaulnes was in the hands of Canadians and Australians. North of the Somme, Americans and British had seized Etinehem and heights between there and Dernancourt. An envelopment of the enemy once hoped for, was now improbable, since the former Montdidier salient had been wiped out and the front had only a slight curve. Allied observers in airplanes reported long streams of troops and transports still rushing eastward, great columns crossing the Somme by bridges badly

damaged by Allied bombers. Eastward past Péronne they moved, many without arms, apparently having discarded weapons. Among them were wounded men staggering along on foot.

Both large tanks and "whippets" had performed great services at a small cost to themselves. In one town, five ponderous monsters rolled directly into the place. When their crews discovered houses crowded with Germans manning machine-guns, principally from second-story windows, one of them leisurely advanced upon a house, and reconnoitering at close range, backed off, then charged home until its great weight crusht in the whole building. It continued forward until the structure was flattened out and the machine-gunners effaced. Then the machine went on and rolled down nine other houses. It literally crusht the village and the Germans within it. German prisoners had boasted that their forces were now equipped with new anti-tank rifles, which could fire large projectiles at great velocity. Actual encounters with them demonstrated that they were failures when trained on armored cars.

Air-fighting surpassed in magnitude of results anything hitherto attained. The destruction of sixty-five German machines one day and sixty-one the next gave a clue to the tremendous struggle going on. Instead of flying at 10,000 feet, aviators were flying only a few hundred feet above the battlefield. Machine-guns and even rifles performed the work of anti-aircraft guns. The Allies could have sacrificed many machines and still held their superiority. They did deadly execution with bombs and guns, attacking troops and transports not only in the line but in depots far behind. The morale of German soldiers was more affected by aeroplanes than by artillery. Nothing was more destructive to the nerves of fighting men than swarms of bombing-machines harrassing them day and night.

The tank had vindicated itself. The most interesting development of weeks had been their successful employment. The Germans had discredited tanks and had underestimated their value. Their value now was their efficacy against machine-guns, which were the kernel of modern defenses. Another value was that they represented an artillery of ac-

companiment and corresponded in importance to those German light guns which kept up with infantry in rapid advances when heavier guns had to be left behind. The tank was the most practicable means of sustaining the momentum of a great attack. Next in importance was the cavalry, who for three years had had little to do. Among suggestions made jokingly in the long years of positional fighting had been one that horses should be killed to feed the armies. Many cavalrymen had been imprest into trench-fighting, but at last cavalry were having an opportunity to get into open action on a considerable scale. While there could be no glorious charges and sabre-flashing dashes through, cavalry could do useful reconnoitering-work for advancing infantry.[26]

The armies of Marwitz and Hutier had been rolled back practically to the old lines which the Germans held in Picardy from the fall of 1914 to the spring of 1917, except in so far as they were altered by the British offensive of 1916 on the Somme and Ancre. Ludendorff now stood on the rim of the old Noyon salient and was fighting a rear-guard battle to extricate his material and armies, just as he had fought for two weeks inside the Marne salient to secure similar salvage. As he had tried to stand on the Ourcq, so now he tried to check the advance on a line from Péronne to Ham, and thence south to Noyon. His own reputation had been damaged, if not ruined. He might still try to camouflage surprize and defeat as he had tried to do in the Marne, but could not camouflage two defeats in succession. Six weeks ago such a forced retirement would have seemed incredible, something beyond Allied capacity to believe. But strategy in the hands of a genius at invention had worked miracles. Foch had only begun to open the eyes of the Entente world to the possibilities of an Allied offensive conducted with finished skill. He was showing the world the difference between mechanical brute-force and highly organized intelligence.

Foch's two offensives had both been marked by efficiency and economy. He had achieved large results at a minimum of cost, compelling the enemy to fight at a disadvantage. In the Marne salient, he exerted just the pressure necessary to

[26] Cable dispatch from Arthur S. Draper to The *Tribune* (New York).

keep the Crown Prince's armies moving north toward the Vesle; with inferior forces he had compelled a retreat of superior forces. In Picardy, having a superiority in numbers at the start, he wiped out the Montdidier salient with ease and at a moderate price in casualties. He did not waste his strength in attacking German lines where they were strongest, but pushed ahead where weak points were discoverable. For two days his policy had been the German policy of infiltration. Foch's strategy and the tactics of generals led by Haig and Pétain with armies and groups of armies under them, had in three weeks wrested from the Germans what they had required four months to obtain at a cost variously estimated at from 700,000 to 1,000,000 men. The immediate results had been the clearing of the Château-Thierry pocket, the ending of the menace to Epernay and Paris, the liberation of Montdidier, the ending of the menace to Amiens, the freeing of the railroad line from Paris to Châlons, and the one from Paris to Amiens, the restoration to the Allies of communications giving them greater ease in movements of troops. These successes rendered impossible in future any separation of the French from the British. The most disastrous consequence to the Germans, aside from their heavy losses in men and material, was the collapse of their plan of driving wedges into Allied lines and so threatening a dislocation. Foch's strategy obliged the Germans either to make a general retreat to a stronger line, or find reserves.[27]

Like a policeman's boot in the door of wrong-doers, in the second week of August the Americans had planted themselves in Fismette, a small French town across the Vesle, and this notwithstanding a rain of shells, gas, shrapnel, high explosive, and furious infantry attacks, all of which failed. The Germans threw 2,000 picked troops, armed with machine-guns, trench-mortars, and flame-throwers, upon 400 Americans. Wave after wave dashed itself against our boys, leaving nearby fields sprinkled with German dead.

The French on August 14 captured Ribecourt, and drove deeper into the position south of Lassigny and Noyon. Through a wooded country they fought in difficulties, cleaning up machine-gunners and beating down German rear-

[27] Cable dispatch from H. Sidebotham to The *Sun* (New York).

guards, despite clouds of mustard-gas. Above the Somme the Germans began a withdrawal on an entirely new sector, north of Albert, on the left of the battle-front. In the sector of Beaumont-Hamel, Serre, Puisieux and Bucquoy, a front roughly of about five miles, they gave up their forward trenches. Australians near the Somme captured Château Wood and improved positions between Gray and Etinehem. Foch had secured strategical results as aimed at in two operations. There was a mournful familiarity about the line from Arras to Ribecourt. Anglo-French armies were facing German armies on the same lines on which both had stood from October, 1914, to July, 1916. Here, between July 1, 1916, and August, 1918, nearly two million casualties had been the price of an Allied advance and a German recoil, of a German advance and an Allied recoil, and finally of this new turn, which brought a second German retirement. After nearly four years there was not, between the Scarpe and Oise, a difference of three miles anywhere in the opposing positions.

Amiens was no longer silent and deserted. In one of the most dramatic ceremonies of the war, while her famous cathedral resounded with speech and song for the first time in five months, the relief of Picardy's capital was consecrated on August 15 simultaneously with the reconsecration of an edifice which had been battered and profaned by German shell and bombs since late in March. The cathedral was newly opened at a mass, attended by every soldier for miles around who could arrange to make the journey. The choir was composed entirely of soldiers in dusty, horizon blue, organist and violinist attired the same way, only the pastor was garbed for the occasion. His assistants, like the choir, wore the uniform of the trenches. Over the high altar the Stars and Stripes fluttered among the flags of the Allies, the wind blowing freely through the shattered windows, from many of which the last splinter of ancient glass was gone. High in nave and transept astonished pigeons, accustomed only to the crashing of shells, fluttered about. In this setting the pastor told the story of the cathedral. Listening were Americans, British, French, Belgian, Italian and other Allied officers and soldiers, standing or sitting between

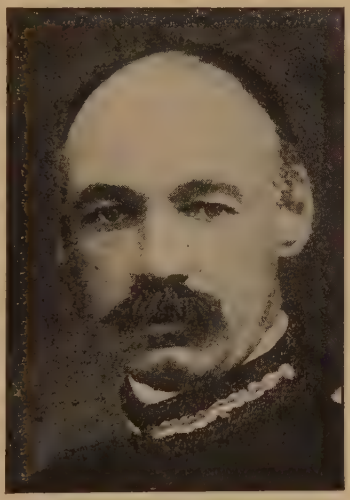
columns protected by sandbags. A few civilians wandered in to give thanks.

The new battle of the Somme was, in one sense, a British victory. The brilliance of the French performance had at first led to a certain slighting of the British contribution. Nowhere, however, was the British achievement more graciously and accurately appraised than in Paris. The main thrust was Rawlinson's. Both Debeney and Humbert profited by British penetration and dislocation of the German lines. The successful coordination of tank and infantry was one of the most brilliant technical achievements in the offensive. It represented an application of the lessons of Cambrai, which for the first time restored the element of surprize and opened the eyes of military men to the possibilities of the future. Ludendorff had first made use of these possibilities, but the British in their turn made an application of them by which they achieved one of the most brilliant of the war's successes. The British army fully recovered from the reverses of the spring, was stronger than ever and in better shape materially. It had full ranks and enormous reserves in guns and munitions. Like the French success at the Marne, this victory was a striking major detail of the campaign of 1918; together the two operations had wrecked Ludendorff's offensive plans. Haig, like Pétain, was entitled to full credit, altho the supreme praise was reserved for Foch.

At the Somme the French were even more useful to the British than the Americans had been to the French at the Marne, but the larger responsibility for achieving the second success belonged to the British, who, after heavy defeat, had come back with renewed energy and scientific mastery. On August 8 the British covered more ground on the Somme front between daylight and noon than they had traversed in all the fighting from July 1 to November 15, 1916, and lost fewer than 10,000 men in doing it. They had lost more than half a million on the Somme two years before. In August, 1918, they captured more prisoners than on the Somme. The Germans captured by British and French together by August 15 totalled 34,000, and 670 guns were captured. Of these the British took 20,000 prisoners and 450 guns. The proportion of German losses to those of the Allies since

August 8 was greater than at any other period of the war. There was clear evidence of the demoralizing effect of tanks. Where previously the Germans offered stubborn resistance, this time they surrendered almost as soon as tanks got near them.

On August 15 the Allies were closing in on Roye, and were in a position to envelop it as they had enveloped Lassigny. Further north the British advanced more than a mile toward Fresnoy-lès-Roye, and about a mile toward Fransart. South of Tilloloy French troops penetrated further into the Bois des Loges —an important German position five miles northeast of Lassigny, and only a mile from the highroad from Roye to Lassigny. Boehm had been put in command of the two German armies between the Somme and Oise, replacing Marwitz and Hutier, each of whom had been acting independently under a separate chief — Marwitz under the Crown Prince of Bavaria and Hutier under the Crown Prince of Prussia. Boehm, who had conducted the retreat out of the Marne pocket to the Vesle, had seemed to Ludendorff the man of the hour for a similar withdrawal behind the Péronne-Noyon line. Belief was growing that the Germans were much nearer the end of their tether than the rest of the world had been allowed to guess. It was known that to make up for the awful wastage in the Marne salient and on the Somme they had practically emptied of men their depots in the interior, and that many thousands of the class of 1920, still in the training stage, had been drafted into garrison-work. The key to their condition lay probably in Russia, where their greed for expansion had led them to "bite off more than they could swallow." Their



General Rawlinson

"conquests" in Russia bade fair to hasten their ruin on the Western Front.[28]

The Allies had now definitely abolished the menace to Paris presented by the Montdidier salient; the Oise, like the Marne, was not only barred, but doubly barred. They had cleared the Germans out of the Amiens front, thus insuring union between British and French armies, had reopened all vital railroad-lines which met in that city, including the main Paris-Amiens-Calais line, which had been cut ever since the German March offensive, a gain comparable to the clearing of the Paris-Châlons-Nancy railroad, and incalculable both with respect to the future security of Anglo-French communications and the greater efficiency of Allied transport. The only serious consequences of all the German gains of the spring and early summer had been abolished and the whole character of the campaign changed. It was no longer a question of whether the German advance could be checked, but of how far the Allied offensive would sweep and what dislocations of the German front between Reims and Arras had become inevitable. We had seen one of the greatest victories thus far won on the Western Front, even if there should be no considerable further German retreat. Germany had suffered not a defeat of arrest, like the first and second Marne, but paralyzing defeat. Her whole campaign was in discard. What remained to be established was the extent to which her retreat would go. Ludendorff's admission after the war confirmed this judgment. Even the Kaiser was afterward declared to have been convinced by this battle of August 8, that Germany could no longer hope to win the war.

The battle for Roye on August 17 had been proceeding fiercely for two days, the Allies making slow but steady progress on two sides. The line was only a mile distant from Roye. At the same time Americans had made a raid in Lorraine which proved so successful that it developed into a larger attack; they captured the village of Frapelle and eliminated a small salient, a forerunner of greater deeds on that front a month later. Many prisoners were taken on August 18. The British in the Lys salient to the north, and the French between the Aisne and Oise, made notable gains.

[28] Paris dispatch to The *Times* (New York).

Lassigny became more seriously threatened by the capture of Fresmières. Haig's advance on the Lys salient carried his line to Merville, which he entered.

Owing to the Russian collapse, the Germans had on the West Front on March 21 a superiority over the French and British of some forty divisions; they had 220 available against 180, and in addition they had devised a new method of attack. They had been able to score some of the greatest victories in the war, during March, before Amiens; during April, in Flanders; and during May, along the Aisne. They had won victories hitherto unprecedented in a war of position and made a momentous record of initial successes achieved by massing superior numbers at a decisive point. In March they had used 110 divisions against 81 of the Allies, and in the first thrust 40 against 15. On the Lys in April they used 40 divisions against 38, but the Allies brought up enough to make an approximately equal number after a long delay and an initial disaster. On the Aisne, in May, 20 German divisions had overwhelmed seven of the French and British.

In March the Germans had had 200 divisions of their 220 available for active work, but when they undertook their fifth offensive in Champagne, in July, they had used at least half of them twice and 25 of them three times. Furthermore, in their defeats in the second Marne and the third Somme the Germans used 70 divisions and 35 respectively, and in this number were included not fewer than 20 of their remaining fresh divisions. They now had in reserve not more than 15 fresh divisions and had unquestionably drawn on these to stabilize the Somme front. Looking at the mathematical side of the problem, the Germans, who had 2,500,000 fresh troops, organized into 200 divisions, on March 21, had on August 15 not more than 15 divisions of actually unused troops, numbering not more than 175,000. Of these 2,500,000 troops, approximately a million had been at least temporarily removed by casualties, and half of that number permanently by death, disability or capture. To replace wastage the Germans had been obliged to draw on depots and to call up young and old, who were inferior manifestly to the units of March.

After five months the recall of French and British divisions from Palestine, Saloniki, and Italy, and the transportation of Metropolitan garrisons from Great Britain to France, had given the French and British a total of at least 190 divisions, besides the five Belgian ones. As for the Americans, they had in France the equal of fifteen German divisions, or 170,000 men, actually engaged during the second battle of the Marne, and the equivalent of ten more on the line. Since that time several other divisions had taken up places at the front. It was for this reason that whereas 195 French, British, Belgian, Portuguese and American divisions faced 220 German divisions on March 21, at least 220 British, French, American and Belgian divisions were in line late in August, and at least 25 additional American divisions were approaching a state of training that made their early employment possible.

Thus, in five months the Germans had lost all the advantages which they originally held. Since their divisions of superior numbers were actually smaller than those of their opponents, they had fewer men on the front, altho conceivably an equal number of divisions, and this inferiority was bound to become more and more marked as American troops arrived at the front, for the Germans had made their maximum effort in March and could not, during the present year's campaign, bring their existing divisions back to their old strength. With nearly forty-five divisions more in March, the Germans had won their greatest victory and were able to continue a victorious career until they lost that advantage of numbers, but having lost the advantage, their defeats became prompt and they had no chance of regaining even the relative comfort of an equal force.

On August 20 Mangin's army threw its full weight against the swaying German line between the Oise and the Aisne, and, in smashing attacks on a sixteen-mile front, drove forward in greater gains than on the first day of the Allied offensive. Eight thousand prisoners, more than a dozen villages and considerable quantities of guns and materials were captured. The French broke down the stiff resistance before Ourscamps Forest and pushed the Germans slowly back from defenses south of Noyon, while the British pushed forward

from three to four miles on the tip of the salient. Vierhouck and La Couronne were occupied and L'Épinette reached. The British advanced slightly east of Arras and the French stormed the village of Bouvraignes, south of Roye. On August 21 Byng's Third Army struck a blow on a ten-mile front, hurling the Germans back from three to four miles between the Ancre and Moyenneville, capturing nearly a dozen villages and taking many prisoners and field-guns. Farther south Mangin's drive increased in magnitude and stormed forward along a twenty-eight-mile front from Lassigny almost to Soissons, gaining five miles at certain points and taking more than twenty villages and thousands of prisoners. The Allies were now driving hard into both flanks of the German positions between Arras and Soissons. South of Noyon, in the center of their line, the French made the greatest advance, pushing through the Ourscamps Forest and Carlepont Wood and reaching the Oise along a two-and-a-half-mile front.

Foch was striking a series of rapid blows. By comparison with the German efforts, his were, in a sense, small, relying as he did upon local effects, produced now near Arras, now near the Oise, now between the Oise and Somme, to create in the aggregate a general dislocation of the German line. In each of these blows he used comparatively few men, so that his victorious troops were ready for a thrust after a short interval, while the Germans got no rest, no time in which to reorganize their forces. The blows rained upon the Germans were none of them knock-out blows, but each added to German confusion and inflicted serious local injuries.

The French, on August 22, continued their advance from Lassigny to Soissons, gaining several miles at some points, capturing many villages and thousands of prisoners. They crossed the Ailette, reached the Oise on a wide front, and crossed it east of Noyon. Then the British launched a new attack on a six-mile front between the Somme and Ancre, capturing Albert and advancing two miles. The Germans were retiring hurriedly on both fronts attacked. Some 5,000 prisoners were taken by the British in two days and the French captured almost 10,000. In four days the Allies had taken well over 20,000 men. Two hundred guns had been

captured since August 20 by Mangin's army alone. The battle was developing into one of the greatest disasters suffered by the Germans. Redoubled German forces were brought up to halt the advance, but they were mown down and thrown into confusion by attacking forces. The battle-front extended over more than fifty miles.

The fix into which Ludendorff had got himself gave him no time to look to the future; the present was more than he could comfortably attend to. Everywhere the Germans were nervous and apprehensive. To retreat under such unrelenting pressure presented to them a ghastly prospect. Yet it was impossible for them to stay where they were. Foch's purpose was so to maul and crush the armies involved that, instead of being able to form a fresh striking force, Ludendorff was obliged to use up such reserves as remained to him in preventing his retreat from becoming a rout, and his withdrawal from degenerating into a disorderly flight.

It was a mistake to think of the operations from Soissons to Arras as a battle. On the contrary, the Germans were declining battle. They had made up their minds to retreat, as a result of defeat—to retreat until they reached certain predetermined positions and achieved certain essential reorganizations, and they wanted to get back with as little cost as possible. Foch meant to hurry and hustle them, to compel them to stop and fight, to fight with artillery, their infantry and machine-guns after they had withdrawn their artillery, to fight under conditions that were unfavorable and to hold positions far longer than they had planned to hold them, thus paying a price out of proportion to temporary values. The real struggle between Ludendorff and Foch was to decide whether the Germans should reach the positions they had fixt as the limit of their retreat, in such condition as to be able to make a new bid for the offensive, or whether they should be so punished and crippled in retreat that they would have to remain on the defensive and thus invite other blows leading eventually to a new defeat. On the whole, matters had all gone Foch's way.

The results achieved by the French under Mangin and Humbert by August 23 made a wonderful record. The

timing of operations had been superb; each separate part of the advance had moved with the regularity of clockwork at just the right moment, patiently when there was need of patience, swiftly when speed was the essential factor, but always irresistibly. After Humbert had nearly overrun the whole network of ridges between the Matz, Oise and Divette, he waited until Mangin had swept up the Oise before he attacked, first at Lassigny and then at Le Piémont, until he occupied the whole massif. When he did attack, both places fell, not to frontal assaults, but by encirclement. At the

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FRENCH CHURCH BELLS TAKEN TO GERMANY

same time Mangin's advance not only to the Oise, but up to the Ailette, put him on the south flank of a difficult country north of the Oise between Noyon and Chauny, ready if necessary to combine with any turning movement that might be made upon it from the north.

The master-stroke of Mangin's advance was the way in which he began by two innocent-looking operations on small fronts, which disposed of a third of the force opposed to him before the battle began, at hardly any cost to his own army. At the same time he acquired a position from which he was able to expand his front and straighten it in such a

way as to turn the enemy's right and force him to retire from the two forests between Pontoise and Pimprez.[29]

British armies on August 23 plunged ahead on a twenty-five mile front from below Arras to Chaulnes, hurling the enemy back two and a half miles at the deepest points, and capturing many villages and several thousand prisoners. The stronghold of Thiépval was taken and Croisilles entered. On their left the British made their greatest gains against fresh German troops. South of Croisilles they pushed forward to within less than half a mile of the railway center of Bapaume. North of the Somme Byng's army took several villages, and before Albert, the Fourth British army captured others. Many prisoners and batteries of howitzers and trench-cannon were captured. Since August 8, 31,000 Germans had been taken prisoner by Byng's and Rawlinson's armies, and 20,000 by the Fourth Army. The French captures in the same period were about as great as the British. The total Allied captives since Foch took the offensive on July 18, were now between 110,000 and 115,000.

The fifth day of the British offensive north and south of the Ancre was the best day of all for Haig's troops. The attack began on a ten-mile front, with an average gain of perhaps two miles. At Achiet-le-Petit a wedge nearly four miles deep was driven in. Altogether, in five days, the British line had moved forward eight miles in the direction of Croisilles and six miles at Mametz and Carnoy on the Albert-Péronne road. In three days the French under Mangin had taken 3,000 prisoners. From Albert, the British under Byng had pounded their way forward with tanks. Between the Oise and Aisne the French process of pinching the Germans out of Noyon went on without pause. The British next day pushed forward along an eighteen-mile front from Croisilles to Bray, to a depth of four miles at some points. They reached the Hindenburg line southeast of Arras, entered Bapaume and captured many towns and prisoners. Their greatest gains were made along the Thiépval Ridge, across the entire length of the Albert-Bapaume road. To the north British outposts pushed their way into Bullecourt on the Hindenburg line, southeast of Croisilles.

[29] Cable dispatch from Gerald Campbell to The *Sun* (New York).

British tanks played an ever-increasing part in the battle. Casualties among tank-crews were slight in proportion to service given. Individual tanks had traveled more than 400 miles in the recent fighting. German officers taken prisoners complained bitterly that when tanks came they tried their best to surrender, hailing them as they would buses, that being the only way they knew in which to indicate their readiness to give up, but the tanks, having small accommodations for prisoners, rolled on, leaving the prisoners for later comers to take. Germans plaintively said this conduct was "ungentlemanly." One officer declared he had been fighting since 1914, and never thought he would be treated to such discourtesy after he had done his enemies the honor of offering to surrender. Armored cars got into roads along which German transport columns were retreating and played havoc with them. Others cut telephone-wires behind the enemy's front, adding to the chaos. One car captured a division headquarters with papers.[30]

The British drive on August 26 spread four miles to the northward in a new flanking movement, Canadians striking a sudden blow before dawn against positions between the Scarpe, before Arras, and north of Croisilles, cutting across the old Hindenburg line, and throwing the Germans back more than two miles at some points. On the front south Haig's armies continued their attacks against German positions between Croisilles and Chaulnes along a front of nearly thirty miles. The French launched two attacks, Debéney's First Army wresting Fresnoy, near Roye, from the enemy, and Mangin's Tenth Army driving its way into St. Mard, north of Soissons. Six hundred Germans were taken prisoners. The British below the Scarpe captured Monchy-le-Preux, the bastion of the Scarpe valley, Guemappe, and Wancourt.

Covered by temporary belts of wire, the German Sixth Army on August 26 was still retiring slowly across the plain of the Lys towards Armentières. The gradual withdrawal had released Merville and brought its machine-gun rearguards within a new line astride the Lys before Neuf-Berquin and Lestrem. British patrols followed closely, every-

[30] Dispatch from Perry Robinson to The *Times* (London).

where in touch with enemy outposts, in some instances 2,000 yards in front of main positions. The British had advanced nearly four miles at one point since the beginning of the German withdrawal. The German general most concerned in this operation was Bernhardi, the writer, who in "Germany and the Next War" had declared some few years before the war began that in the next conflict in which Germany engaged, she would achieve "either world empire or downfall." Bernhardi commanded a corps which had been badly dented during its tenure of the Merville salient, its tired divisions repeatedly deprived of trench-positions by minor attacks and raids, and constantly disturbed by enfilade fire. Bernhardi's honest opinion of the war-outlook at that time would have been interesting. The surprize attack had dislocated his plans, and he was not likely to forget his earlier experiences on the Lys, nor the extent of the punishment he had received. It had been a bitter blow to him to abandon newly established depots, munition-dumps, railroads, and bridges constructed under constant bombardment and at heavy sacrifice in order to make possible another drive on Hazebrouck and Calais.

Foch's aggressive strategy was not an imitation of Ludendorff's; it was not spasmodic, but smoothly continuous, and consisted in exerting pressure along a broad front and striking successively and rapidly at points where the defense seemed flabbiest. Ludendorff had ignored his opportunity to retire cheaply and in a more or less leisurely manner, and now Foch's strategy kept him from retiring at all, except under conditions which involved great risk and heavy penalties. He was closely beset from Arras to Reims. If he yielded too much at any one point his whole line would be jeopardized. The Germans were paying again and again the penalty of having underestimated Foch's generalship. Ludendorff's whole western campaign went to wreck when he assumed that he could break the fighting spirit of the Allies before August. The fighting spirit of his own troops was now failing and he was casting about anxiously for a defensive position on which to hold Allied armies until winter set in.

The Hindenburg line had become merely a belt or zone

—not a stiff, impregnable barrier. No line could be held now except by troops which had the stamina, resolution and numbers to mend it, when broken, by counter-attacks. It was a question not of trenches or natural obstructions, but of infantry of sufficient strength and quality. Haig was up to the Hindenburg line opposite Arras and in the neighborhood of Coucy-le-Château. Mangin's army was also close to the line where it swept down west of La Fère and circled the Forest of St. Gobain. Foch was maneuvering to force the Germans everywhere back to this line. But most of all his objective was the German army, now disadvantageously placed between Arras and Reims. To inflict the greatest possible losses on this army while it retreated was his chief purpose. Everywhere it was being outfought It could not hold the line before Arras or before Albert, Bapaume and Roye. It continued in retreat on August 26, between Arras and the Soissons sector. British and French steadily reclaiming towns, villages, and territory that long had been in German hands. Instead of halting his men for a breathing-spell, Foch was pushing them forward with greater impetus. Haig's forces were gradually cutting their way eastward, north and south of the Somme, and putting down counter-offensive actions. Before the British captured Bapaume, there had been bitter fighting for days.

After the fall of Chaulnes, the French overran the southern portion of Picardy and reached the western bank of the Canal Du Nord. East and southeast of Noyon important positions were taken. Between the Oise and Aisne the French overcame heavy resistance and crossed the Ailette. Northwest of Soissons, where Americans were now in line with the French in the general movement of clearing Picardy, there had been severe fighting, the Allied forces having the advantage. One of the strangest things in the fighting was the way in which it thrilled one's memories of 1916. The Allies had come into possession of, and were making temporary use of, the very prison-cages which they had crowded with Germans in the same month two years before. Grass was now growing rank inside the wire-inclosures. The recent dead had been buried in an old graveyard beside their comrades who had fallen in the first Somme fighting.

Agricultural machinery left behind in the Allied retreat in March had again become theirs.

On August 8 the actors in this offensive were chiefly men from overseas; troops from the British Isles had only a small part in the attack. Later a few Americans were called in. The main honors in the first advance were shared by Australians and Canadians. On the Luce, it was chiefly a Canadian battle, and the Luce was the core of the operation. On Canadian progress depended the advance of both the Australians left and the French armies on the right. The Canadians said the fighting of the first two days was the biggest thing that Canada had done in the war, not excepting their famous capture of Vimy Ridge. Apart from the Canadians, the burden fell on the Australians, altho they had incidental cooperation from British units. In its later phases the battle was an Australian battle Before this offensive began the Australians had been fighting from Morlancourt to Merris in the Lys salient and had swept across the Santerre plateau. Afterward they bore the brunt of the struggle on a wide front and made splendid advances on both sides of the Somme.

Roye, the German base on the Avre, which had been an objective of Allied attacks for weeks, fell on August 27, before the French under Debéney, who captured half a dozen other towns in an advance on a front of more than twelve miles. At some points the French gained ground to a depth of two miles and a half, forcing the enemy back on both sides of the Avre. At four o'clock next afternoon Debéney's men were in the region of Hattencourt. French encircling tactics having overcome numerous machine-gun nests. Strongly protected and heavily armed positions were turned, one after another, until the enemy was obliged to abandon the first, and then the second, line of defense, upon which he fell back after he was driven out of Montdidier. The final break in the German second line came when, after repulsing a counter-attack upon St. Mard, French infantry resumed the offensive, completely encircled Roye, and threw the enemy back several miles east of the town.

While the Germans were defending themselves from the Ancre to Soissons, Haig struck another surprize-blow over a

new front north of the old battle-zone. It was launched from east of Arras and southward to the Cojeul. The British pushed forward, at some places to a depth of more than two miles, and captured a half-dozen or more villages. Additional gains were made east of Albert on both sides of the Somme, notwithstanding the use made of large reinforcements. British and French from Albert to Soissons materially bettered their positions. Another British advance carried a force well up heights overlooking Péronne, which was

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A FRENCH FACTORY WRECKED BY GERMANS
The wreckers have allowed themselves to be seen among the wreckage

directly menaced. Canadians, Scottish, and English troops captured several villages and reaped a new harvest of prisoners. North of the Scarpe, Haig's men were a mile and a half beyond the Hindenburg line. Next day British and French drove the Germans across the Somme and won the greatest area taken by the Allies in one day in France since trench-warfare began. Along a thirty-mile front, from the Somme, before Péronne, to the Oise below Noyon, they hurled

the Germans back to a depth of more than eight miles at some points. The thrust broke the strength of their resistance and forced them back in precipitate retreat. The French alone captured forty villages, three trains of war-material, besides quantities of other booty, and thousands of prisoners. Nesle, the railroad center and key-position in the German defense, fell early in the fighting. The Allies then stormed their way eastward to heights along the Somme between Péronne and Nesle and to the Canal du Nord between Nesle and Noyon.

Ludendorff's front in Picardy and Artois had caved in in the center. The improvised line which he had been attempting to hold from Arras to Noyon had broken at important points. Roye had gone the way of Lassigny. Debéney's First French Army, in driving through Roye in pursuit of the beaten Germans, took half a dozen towns north and south of Roye, and advanced two miles and a half on a fourteen-mile front. Above Roye the French reached Liancourt and Crémery, on the Roye-Péronne highroad. The whole German front in Picardy and Artois had been shaken loose. Ludendorff had gambled on standing fast there. He foolishly wasted reserves trying to stave off the inevitable. Political reasons influenced him, no doubt, but that fact could not wholly excuse his strategy.

North of Chaulnes, on the left bank of the Somme, the British advanced about three miles—to the outskirts of Dompierre, which is about six miles southwest of Péronne. On the other bank of the Somme equally rapid progress was made. A little further north the British Third Army reached the outskirts of Guillemont, which was only two miles northwest of Combles, the midway-point in any defensive line running from Péronne to Bapaume. Bapaume, when enveloped, was virtually abandoned. The British had reached the outskirts of Vaux-Vraucourt, four miles northeast of Bapaume, and were close to the highroad leading from Bapaume to Cambrai. Still further up they had broken through the Wotan line. Even the Hindenburg line was no sure refuge now for a beaten and demoralized army. There was nothing sacrosanct any longer in trenches and battle-positions, even if they were baptized Hindenburg, Wotan,

Siegfried, Valkyrie, or Valhalla. Gas and tanks and new offensive methods had greatly impaired the power of the defensive.

Ludendorff's second line in Picardy—roughly speaking, the old German line of November, 1914, to March, 1917—had been completely broken and retreat from it was under full headway. Chaulnes had fallen; so had Nesle. Péronne was gravely threatened and Noyon was surrounded. The difficulties of a German stand on the Péronne-Noyon line had become almost insuperable. Ludendorff would be lucky if he could stop on the Hindenburg line. Australian divisions operating north of Chaulnes reached a front stretching from Herbecourt to Fresnes. Further south Horne's troops had taken Rémy and Haucourt, which lay along the main highroad from Arras to Cambrai. Douai was only about seven miles from the British front, Cambrai only about twelve. The British First Army was advancing well to the rear of the Hindenburg line—a development of startling importance, because to take Douai, or even to threaten it, would be to shake the whole German scheme of defense from Lens to the North Sea. To get close in to Cambrai would be to shatter the German line south as far as St. Quentin. Ludendorff had delayed his extrication in Picardy until his whole front had begun to topple. His troops did not hold and his reserves were low. He had only insecure positions behind him. What he faced was not an easy retirement from a protected pocket like the Marne, but a fierce rush to the rear on a front of 100 miles or more, which could not be accelerated or halted at a mere word of command. It had to run its course. Neither Ludendorff nor any one else at German Grand Headquarters could tell where the German armies would be when their course was run. Behind the Hindenburg line was the line of the French frontier.

Ludendorff's retirement had reached a point where it was plain that any further advance would bring the British army up to the Dracourt-Quéant switch, running down from the German line behind Lens to the main Hindenburg line east of Croissilles. It was the ultimate barrier to a British advance on Douai and Cambrai, and Douai and Cambrai were keys to the region now occupied by Germans in northern

France. If the British could reach either, the Germans would have to make a tremendous retirement both north and south. They would in fact have to go back to the Belgian frontier, and the deliverance of France would be substantially accomplished. After the switch was passed, the British without delay could, if they chose, push their attack up against the last line covering Cambrai and Douai, with their vital network of roads and railways. With these gone the Hindenburg line to the south would become worthless, and the Germans would have to retire on a front from Lille to Verdun.

There was clear evidence that Ludendorff had heavily reinforced his troops holding the region astride the Bapaume-Cambrai road. He had great accumulations of stores in this region and was anxious to get them away. North of Bapaume he seemed to have done no more than hold up the advance; south of it his counter-attacks had made some little progress only. The French had rapidly followed up their occupation of Roye, and Roye with Nesle, Noyon and Ham formed the four corners of a square, nearly all of which were now in Allied hands. From Ham one road led to Péronne, another to St. Quentin. The importance of St. Quentin and the reason the Germans held it so firmly was that it flanked the pivotal position of La Fère.

Many causes were ascribed for the failure of the Germans to hold up Haig's first rush in the offensive of August 8. The most likely one was the extreme difficulty they had in changing from the offensive to the defensive The tactics of defense are quite a separate art from those of offense. Troops need carefully specialized training for the change, and since the Germans had sacrificed everything for an offensive, they were totally unprepared for retiring when Foch's attack turned the tide. They were insufficiently intrenched. Their best men had been used up in an abortive offensive, with the result that the heart was taken out of those who remained. Moreover, the German is not a person who can suddenly adapt himself to changed conditions. It takes a Frenchman to do that.

Noyon, the German stronghold at the apex of the Oise-Canal du Nord salient, was captured by the French under

Humbert, on August 28. Landrimont (between Noyon and Mordincourt) was also taken. The French were at the gates of Ham, about six miles southeast of Nesle. Mangin's forces had crossed the Ailette at several points and captured the villages of Guny and Pont St. Mard. Bitter fighting reached the neighborhood of Ham. Below Arras Pétain's armies swept forward for new gains of four miles, throwing forces across the Somme south of Péronne, where they outflanked the city, entered many villages and took a large number of prisoners. Along the whole front the German defense gave way. On the British right the French attacked on both sides of Noyon, Debéney's army reaching the Canal du Nord, stretching to the north along almost its entire length, and Humbert's pushing across the Oise from the south reaching Happlincourt and the slopes of Mount St. Simeon, a mile northeast of Noyon.

At Noyon the devastation was as complete as Germans could make it. Houses had become mere shells of crumbling walls, streets piled high with heaps of stone. Most of this was the result of pure wantonness. The Germans shelled the town day and night for eight days. After the advance had forced their guns away they sent aeroplanes to wreak a last vengeance upon the city. Where once had stood a girls' school, one could only see that there had been a building. An almshouse for old men was in the same condition; everything would have to be rebuilt from the foundation. In a square where had stood the house of Calvin, one of Noyon's prides, lay a big pile of stones, in which not even a trace of a wall was distinguishable. Mine craters were everywhere. Houses had evidently been burned as well as shelled. The town hall, one of the finest pieces of Renaissance architecture in France, had been smashed with true German thoroughness, the inside completely gutted by fire and piled with charred beams and blocks of carved stone. Just enough of the façade of beautiful stone-work remained to show what it had been. Mines destroyed what shells spared. Wooden structures erected by the American Red Cross near the town hall, had become mere heaps of ashes.

The Cathedral escaped, altho the roof was pierced by a dozen shells. Stonework in the right-hand tower had been smashed

and the porch well-nigh obliterated. The interior had suffered little. Chairs were still arranged in rows, the high altar wholly intact, and, tho the floor was covered with broken glass and rubbish, the work of restoration would not be difficult. In one of the side chapels, where no shells or splinters had penetrated, was a picture of Christ, ten feet square, pierced with seven round holes, as if by a revolver in the hands of some German who thus had added sacrilege to vandalism. With the exception of the cathedral and buildings in one little side street, there was nothing in Noyon that had escaped. The mayor reckoned less than 10 per cent. capable of reconstruction. Homes could be rebuilt, hard tho that would be, but nothing could replace the art of previous generations that were Noyon's pride.[31]

The most serious problem in reconstruction was clearly to be that which concerned the destroyed French towns. There was nothing but ruin in Montdidier. The mere clearing of the site would be a prodigious work. Roye and Nesle, and perhaps Soissons and Fismes, were in slightly less extreme ruin. Compiègne and its palace with Napoleonic and other memories, its Renaissance town hall, substantial villas, and forest rides, had been one of the most delightfully characteristic of French country-towns—gracious, dignified, sleepy, and happy, but about one house in five had apparently been destroyed, and one in two had been damaged. The palace had received several shells and the hospital had one wing shattered. The whole town had been evacuated for three months. Even in sunny days it had become a lamentable solitude. Millions on millions would be needed to rebuild these French towns, once so quaint and fair, and such choice possessions for cultivated men and women everywhere.

The Germans were now scuttling back through the desert they had made, broken in strength and morale, losers in their great final gamble for victory. Soon all they would have to show for five grandiose offensives would be a bitter memory of failure. German defeat might this year become a military disaster, if not the decisive battle of the war. The thing which stood out was not the Allied recapture of ruined villages, or advances over miles of territory, but the con-

[31] Cable dispatch from Walter Duranty to The *Times* (New York).

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A PART OF NOYON AFTER THE GERMAN EVACUATION

dition to which the German army was being reduced in its inability to get away from the consequences of its defeats on July 18 and August 8 and reorganize its strategy as well as its shattered divisions. For three weeks Ludendorff and Boehm had foreseen a great withdrawal, a retreat to the Hindenburg line. Could they have made this retreat as the retreat of 1917 was made, they might have regained strategic freedom, liquidated the consequences of Foch's success, and been able to conduct a successful defensive, with local offensive details until the end of the season.

It had become the sober judgment of British and French military men that if Ludendorff had stuck to his push for Amiens in March instead of turning north to Flanders, he might have captured Amiens and separated the British and French armies. He gave that drive up because his gigantic machine had run down, and he had exhausted his stored resources in his colossal push from St. Quentin to Montdidier. Foch's method had been quite different. He did not use up his armies; did not concentrate all his human and mechanical resources on a single thrust, but used one army after another and kept varying his attack. The result was that none of his armies became exhausted, and after a little rest each could resume its work. There was no let-up, as there was with Ludendorff in Picardy, no pause as there was after the Aisne, when Ludendorff waited forty days before trying again. Ludendorff, after July 18, had to meet practically continuous attacks, now in Ile-de-France, now in Picardy, now in Artois, and an extension of the attack to Champagne and Flanders was foreshadowed There was no respite for him and there was likely to be none, for Foch now had large American reserves.

The most satisfactory feature in the situation was that Foch had done this while as yet he had no material superiority in numbers, altho bound to have superiority in future when the enemy would learn what the great combined Allied offensive really meant. In the meantime Ludendorff was only making himself look foolish when he claimed that the Allies were "vainly attempting to break through two or three times a week." His strongest defensive card lay in his power to fall back to an ever-shortening front, because he

could thus save some forty divisions, a great matter to him, and when he got further back could save more.

The public was naturally skeptical over an oft-repeated statement that the Allied casualties had been light and the enemy's heavy, but the actual figures of losses in a week's fighting showed that never before had the Allies gained anything approaching the same amount of ground, or captured so many prisoners and guns at so light a sacrifice. They had learned much, and in nothing improved more than in methods of tackling the deadly machine-gun upon which the enemy was now relying. They had devices in plenty for that purpose. The Germans had proved themselves admirable planners except when they had to deal with the daily changes and chances of war, when they threw away opportunity after opportunity. The principles of Ludendorff's plan, however, had been sound. He had learned from Cambrai in 1917 the effect of surprize in trench-warfare, and saw that the British failed because they had no weight behind their blow. Ludendorff had plenty of weight behind his, and that was why he got results quickly. Tanks, airplanes, weight of artillery, and the other thousand and one devices of modern warfare, were all of value, some of them of increasing and inestimable value, but nothing had yet replaced in war big battalions. The Allied offensive, great as

A DOG WITH A GAS-MASK

This dog was employed by a sanitary corps in locating wounded soldiers

its promise was in 1917, did not have the needed weight to carry it through to complete victory. The length of the war now depended mainly on when the Allies should have the necessary weight. America was sending troops over as fast as she could get ships; France was, and had long been, making the greatest effort of which she was capable.

On September 1 Péronne, the German stronghold at the great bend of the Somme, fell before the assaults of the Australians, who took two suburbs of the town in one operation. More than 2,000 prisoners were captured. Further north the British drove the Germans from villages south of Bapaume and the struggle astride the Hindenburg line northeast of Bapaume was continued with success. In the Lys salient the Germans continued to retreat and the British to advance. The British had captured in the month of August, 57,318 prisoners, 657 guns, more than 5,970 machine-guns and 1,000 trench-mortars, besides quantities of war material.

During the first days in August the Twenty-seventh American Division had moved up to the Kemmel Hill sector, relieving the Sixth and Forty-first British Divisions. A barrage fell upon the One Hundred and Seventh Infantry, formerly the old Seventh of New York, but the raid was a failure. In an attack on Vierstraat Ridge, from August 31 to September 2, the Germans were forced to retreat from Kemmel and from the territory south of it. As a result of three days' fighting, the Twenty-seventh captured Vierstraat Ridge, Rosignol Wood, Petit Bois, and Plateau Farm. Many prisoners were taken and a new line was established on favorable ground.[32]

[32] Principal Sources: William L. McPherson in the *Tribune* (New York), The *Morning Post* (London), The *Evening Sun* (New York), the "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, The *Tribune* (New York), The *Times* (London), Associated Press and United Press dispatches.

WHERE AMERICANS IN AUGUST, 1918, FOUGHT WITH THE BRITISH
After the Germans took Kemmel Hill in April, 1918, they carried on bombardments to the west, reaching as far as Locre and Westoutre, and at the latter place a church was destroyed. This was the high-water mark of their drive in Flanders. Early in August the American Twenty-seventh Division was sent to this sector to cooperate with the British, being at first stationed north and west of Dickebusch Lake. In the course of fighting in August, a new German line was established beyond this lake at Vierstraat Ridge. The Twenty-seventh, late in September, was called south of this sector to join the British in the drive against the Hindenburg line at the St. Quentin Canal and tunnel

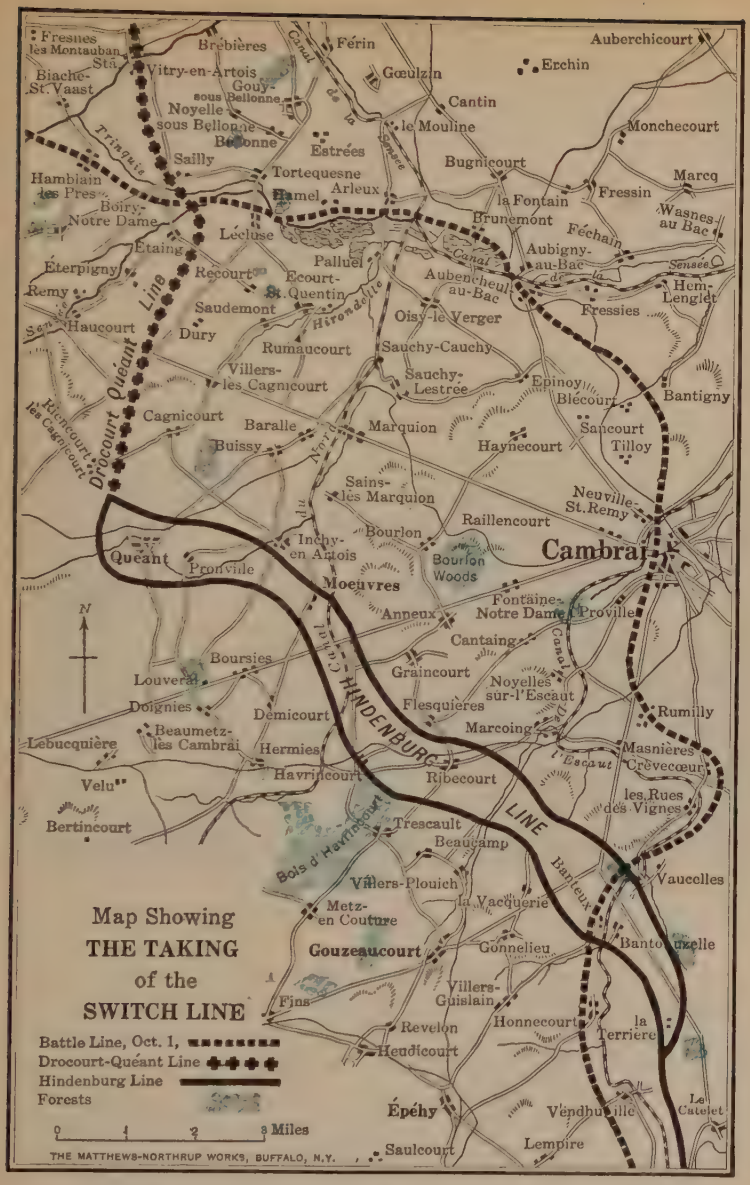
## V

## THE TAKING OF THE "SWITCH LINE"—SEDAN DAY AND SOME OTHER DAYS—AIR-RAIDS ON GERMAN TOWNS

August 29, 1918—September 9, 1918

ACCEPTING a proposal from Horne, Haig late in August instructed him to break through the Drocourt-Quéant line, otherwise known as "the Switch Line," at its southern end and attack Cambrai from the north, while the Third British Army was to threaten it from the south. Horne redistributed his divisions on August 29, placing the Canadians in the center astride the Arras-Cambrai road with the Fourth Division on their left and Ferguson's Seventeenth Corps on their right. On the 30th the attack was launched. The Canadians, rushing through the enemy's defenses between Heudecourt and Haucourt, reached the "Switch Line" in the evening, while on the left the Fourth Division stormed Etrépagny. Violent fighting went on all day west of the Bullecourt-Reincourt-Quéant triangle, a maze of interdependent trenches and tunnels which Bülow had been ordered to hold to the last. The battle went on without any respite throughout the night and next day, when the Fifty-sixth and Fifty-seventh Divisions held on firmly to the two villages, Bullecourt and Heudecourt, which they captured on the 29th, the Fifty-second Division being thrown into the battle-line to support them.

On the night of September 1 Reincourt was captured, and next day the Fifty-second and Fifty-seventh divisions, continuing the attack with the Sixty-third Division, captured Quéant and broke clean through the enemy's defenses as far as Pronville. On their left the Canadian Corps, reinforced by a third division, met with equal success north and south of the Arras-Cambrai road, establishing themselves at nightfall 3,000 yards beyond the "Switch Line," in the vil-


Map Showing
THE TAKING
of the
SWITCH LINE
Battle Line, Oct. 1,
Drocourt-Quéant Line
Hindenburg Line
Forests
0 1 2 3 Miles
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.
Cambrai
HINDENBURG LINE
Drocourt Quéant Line
Fresnes les Montauban
Biache-St. Vaast
Vitry-en-Artois
Gouy-sous Bellonne
Noyelle sous Bellonne
Bellonne
Sailly
Hambiain les Près
Boiry-Notre Dame
Étaing
Écurie
Éterpigny
Remy
Recourt
Ecourt-St. Quentin
Saudemont
Haucourt
Dury
Rumaucourt
Villers-les Cagnicourt
Cagnicourt
Buissy
Baralle
Marquion
Sains-les Marquion
Inchy-en Artois
Bourlon
Bourlon Woods
Raillencourt
Sauchy-Lestrée
Sauchy-Cauchy
Oisy-le Verger
Aubencheul-au-Bac
Aubigny-au-Bac
Brunemont
Féchain
Lécluse
Palluel
Arleux
Hamel
Tortequesne
Estrées
Bugnicourt
le Mouline
Cantin
Gœulzin
Férin
Brébières
Auberchicourt
Erchin
Monchecourt
Marcq
Fressin
Wasnes-au Bac
Hem-Lenglet
Fressies
Bantigny
Blécourt
Epinoy
Sancourt
Tilloy
Haynecourt
Neuville-St. Remy
Proville
Fontaine-Notre Dame
Anneux
Moeuvres
Pronville
Quéant
Cantaing
Graincourt
Noyelles sur-l'Escaut
Flesquières
Marcoing
Rumilly
Masnières
Crèvecœur
les Rues des Vignes
Vaucelles
Banteux
Ribecourt
Havrincourt
Hermies
Demicourt
Doignies
Louverval
Boursies
Beaumetz-les Cambrai
Lebucquière
Velu
Bertincourt
Trescault
Beaucamp
Villers-Plouich
Metz-en Couture
Gouzeaucourt
La Vacquerie
Gonnelieu
Villers-Guislain
Fins
Revelon
Heudicourt
Honnecourt
la Terrière
Épéhy
Vendhuille
Le Catelet
Lempire
Saulcourt
Bois d'Havrincourt
Canal de la Sensée
Canal de l'Escaut
Canal de la Sensée
Canal de la Sensée
Canal de la Sensée

lages of Villers-le-Cagincourt and Drury. Further north the Fourth Division, debouching from Etrépagny, passed through Étain and reached the western end of the Sensee marshes at Lecluse. By the night of September 2, which was Sedan Day, the victory was complete; the Drocourt-Quéant line had been pierced along a twelve-mile front south of the Scarpe, the Germans put to flight, and 10,000 prisoners captured. The Germans fell back on the Canal du Nord, with Horne's troops following hard on their heels.

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QUEANT ON THE "SWITCH" PART OF THE HINDENBURG LINE

By this victory seemingly was ended the menace of the Hindenburg line in the south, which the British were gradually approaching over its entire front. Roads to Douai, Cambrai and St. Quentin had now been thoroughly invested by British and French armies, while north of Soissons French and Americans were in positions of vantage from which to carry out turning movements which would outflank Laon and the Chemin-des-Dames and Aisne line. Haig's operation east of Arras had proved once more that lines had lost the value they had had in strictly positional warfare.

What was a rigid line in 1916 had become in 1918 a death-trap for those who defended it. The British moving east from Arras easily broke the Wotan line, on which they had been held all through 1917, then pushed ahead to the alternative Quéant-Drocourt line, and now had driven through that line on a wide front, bearing steadily down toward Cambrai, southeast of Arras, and toward Douai, northeast of Arras. Cambrai and Douai were both well east of all the barriers which the Germans had established in Northeastern France in 1916 and 1917, when they accepted the defensive there in order to have a freer hand in dealing with Russia and Roumania.

The British attack of September 2 went through the supposedly invincible Quéant-Drocourt position, the work of two years, in spite of all that the German divisions holding it could do. The position was no stronger than the infantry that defended it. In a few hours the lower half of the belt was practically abolished. Horne, who turned the trick, approached from the northwest and crusht resistance in that direction. The brilliant stroke brought the most dangerous break yet made in German defenses in France, for it might open up the rear of the Hindenburg line to which Ludendorff was retreating and behind which he had hoped to find a respite. This might be only a prelude to a new retreat, which would carry him back to the French border and into Belgium—that is, to the line of the Meuse The breaking through of the Drocourt-Quéant line, fourteen miles on a six-mile front carried the British further east in Artois than they had been since the beginning of the war. The so-called "Switch Line," known a year before as the Siegfried line, had been created in February, 1916, with a double purpose—as an outpost of the northern part of the Hindenburg line and as a protection to the supply depots of Douai and Cambrai. In the southeast was another protective line, almost a continuation of the Siegfried, known as the Wotan line, and twelve miles long.

The Germans had wished at all hazards to protect Douai and Cambrai, as these places fed the Hindenburg line as far down as the sector supplied from Laon. In their retreat they had turned St. Quentin and La Fère from supply stations into

strongly fortified positions. In the battle of Cambrai in November, 1917, the British had flanked the Siegfried line on the south, but could not get in its rear on account of the Wotan line. They crossed almost its entire length and pierced the Hindenburg line at Marcoing, five miles southwest of Cambrai, but in an attempt to utilize the position thus obtained, Byng exposed his right wing fo a German counter-attack which was successfully made on November 30. The British were able all that winter to hold only the horizontal position at the end of the Siegfried line, and the first move in the great German offensive of March 21 was to deprive them of it. The ultimate defense of Germany's western frontier seemed now imposed on what was known as the line of the Meuse, which had an average distance of ninety miles east of the Hindenburg line. On this line were the Belgian forts of Liége and Namur, and the fortified camps of Mézières, Sedan, and Verdun. It was the Rhine's historic protection in the west.

September 2, Sedan Day, fell on the American Labor Day—the first Monday in the month. For the Germans it was the gloomiest Sedan Day they had known since the French surrender of 1870. Following the many defeats their armies had suffered in six weeks, had come on their great holiday the crushing reverse at the Quéant-Drocourt line, which had now been overrun by the British for more than half of its length and ten thousand prisoners had been taken, the full strength of a German division. This was not the worst of it, because Horne's operation had proved once more that there was no longer any inherent strength in fortified lines; they could not hold unless armies defending them were equal to the task of counter-attacking. Any line the Germans might erect in France or Belgium could be broken now with the methods and appliances at the disposal of Foch. Ludendorff's loss of the offensive at a critical moment of the campaign had pinned Germany down to an exhausting struggle to hold positions which could not be held and imposed on her the prospect of constant retirements, of a weakening of man-power, a slackening morale and an acute psychological depression. It was a bitter Sedan Day for her.

The Germans were retiring everywhere behind the Canal du Nord, which runs northeast from Péronne to Douai. On its

lower stretch, just north of Péronne, the British had crossed it. Douai and Cambrai were under the fire of Allied artillery. Unless German resistance stiffened considerably those important cities would soon go the way of Chaulnes, Roye, Lassigny, Noyon and Péronne and La Bassée and Armentières would probably have to be given up. On the Lys the Germans were nearly back to the line from which they attacked on April 9. They had surrendered all the fruits of Ludendorff's second offensive practically without a blow. Haig's victory was not to be measured by the number of prisoners taken, estimated at more than 10,000, and they might be doubled; but by the significance of the German breakdown, and practically the elimination of the Drocourt-Quéant defensive line guarding Douai and Cambrai. No official cleverness could distort the meaning of that defeat. We were seeing the battering down of German defenses all the way from Ypres to Péronne, the British pressing their advantage in Flanders, where La Bassée was about to fall, as well as in Artois. The condition of the German army verged on demoralization. At no time in the war had it suffered such heavy losses in men and guns. The tally of prisoners taken by the Allies in little more than six weeks was nearly 150,000.

The news was stirring enough as a record of concrete achievement—an accentuated drive for Cambrai and Douai, an early occupation of Lens, for which in other years so much British blood had been spent, the flattening out of the Armentières salient with a renewal of the threat against Lille and, what the Germans could afford least, the capture of thousands of prisoners. Still more cheering was the proof that the limits of the Allied offensive were not fixt by references to the map, or by estimating the difference between temporary lines and permanent lines, but only by the factor of time. It was not the Hindenburg line, or any other line which might exist behind it, that would bring Allied pressure to an end, but winter, and only that. It had been shown that the method of surprize could be practised against any defensive system whatever, provided the assailant had in hand the initiative and the necessary numerical forces. There was not the least doubt that the Germans were surprized on the Wotan line. In the unexpectedness of that

attack, Haig's troops went through a permanent battle position as easily as previous offensives had gone through advanced zones.

By vindicating the soundness of the human factor against the mechanical factor—brains against massed force—Foch had found the device by which the Allies could capitalize their existing advantages. Human wit was embodied in Foch and the necessary human resources were embodied in the steadily growing Allied numbers. The Allies had brushed aside the German line by simply refusing to believe that there was any vital distinction between fortified lines and open fighting. We had seen the theory applied by Haig in storming against the Wotan line, and by Mangin in his slow but steady push toward the forests and massif of St. Gobain. Haig had shown that permanent lines could be broken, Mangin, with Humbert and Debény, that forests and hills could be conquered. The victory seemed complete. Without having delivered a single counter-attack, and staggering under the blows administered to them, the Germans were in flight toward the eastern side of the Canal du Nord. They were trying to save what men and material they could from the wreck in and behind one of the most powerful defense-systems ever devised. The much-boasted Drocourt-Quéant line had been totally shattered.

Behind the British there was for many miles a stricken wilderness. Beyond Neuville-Vitasse, Boiry and Croisilles was nothing but a landscape of bare monotony rising and falling slightly from one slope to another without high-roads, without a river or a valley to break its lines, without ruins more than rubbish heaps of brick which once were hamlets. Trenches marked by hummocks of white chalk zig-zagged over an infernal desolation, with tangles of barbed wire, all rusted to the color of withered bracken; piles of abandoned shells gleamed wet in the rain, thousands of stick-bombs, gas-masks, helmets, boots, rifles, shattered gun-limbers, lorries smashed to pieces by explosives, and huts broken to matchwood flung about among tumbledown dug-outs, deserted gun-pits, overturned blockhouses, dead horses, and deep shell-pits. Through this plague-stricken land for mile after mile men were marching, guns were going up,

and tents being pitched. The only thing left standing in the center of Croisilles, which was so far destroyed that hardly one brick stood whole upon another, was a Calvary of life size, the figure of Christ, however, detached from the cross and lying with face upward on a little hillock, but the Madonna was still almost unscarred, and the figure of St. John was standing out above the wreckage with a queer gesture of pity for the evil Germans had done.[1]

In sinking its provinciality, the British army had found itself; it had achieved new distinction and now could threaten Douai and Cambrai. Without Cambrai the Germans could not hold St. Quentin, and with St. Quentin would go Laon, La Fère and the Gobain Forest. Douai offered a road to Lille. The enemy's alternatives were to hold the extremities of the line or evacuate almost all of France. Mangin's troops at this time were making a courageous fight south of the St. Gobain Forest. In this region the French were facing a part of the Hindenburg line which, without the aid of tanks, they already had broken into from the Mont de Singes to Vailly. They were slowly pushing on toward the Chemin-des-Dames. Bitter experience had given them intimate knowledge of the ground and all its possibilities of ambush—thickets in steep ravines where German machine-gunners congregated, and deep limestone caves and quarries with which the hillsides were riddled. Instead of making frontal attacks on the Aisne Heights from the south, Mangin was turning the enemy from the west. Three days of well-directed pressure had brought Mangin to the height of Fort Malmaison, had yielded 4,500 prisoners, and had placed the fate of the whole center of the Hindenburg line directly in jeopardy.

Native Africans were a part of Mangin's army. North Africa by July, 1918, had given to France about 340,000 troops, from a population in pacified districts of less than 7,000,000. The Sudan and Senegal, with a little assistance from Tonkin and Madagascar, had furnished about 250,000, while 60,000 more were being recruited in those countries, and a fresh July levy in North Africa was expected to supply 30,000. The total to be obtained from Africa and

[1] Cable dispatch from Philip Gibbs to The *Times* (New York).

Asia was approaching 700,000, figures which did not include laborers, the number of whom was placed at 238,000. Meanwhile the French West Indies had supplied 31,000. When men praised the magnificent struggle waged by native French soldiers, credit had also to be given to the great levies that had been brought into France from possessions outside of Europe.

When British patrols approached Écourt-St. Quentin, three men in civilian clothing emerged to meet them. After hearing their story, British troops rushed into the town and found there forty-six persons, thirty of whom were women, hiding in cellars. After being helped out, they crossed the battlefield, struggling over shell-craters and occasionally menaced by a hail of indirect machine-gun fire from the Germans. It was a strange and pitiful procession. These men and women had been under German domination since September, 1914; they had not seen a single Allied soldier in that time, this being the first occasion on which their village had been out of German possession. They were aged and unkempt French people, staring at bare, shell-shattered fields, the roads alive with troops, among whom were women carrying parcels or pushing perambulators.[2]

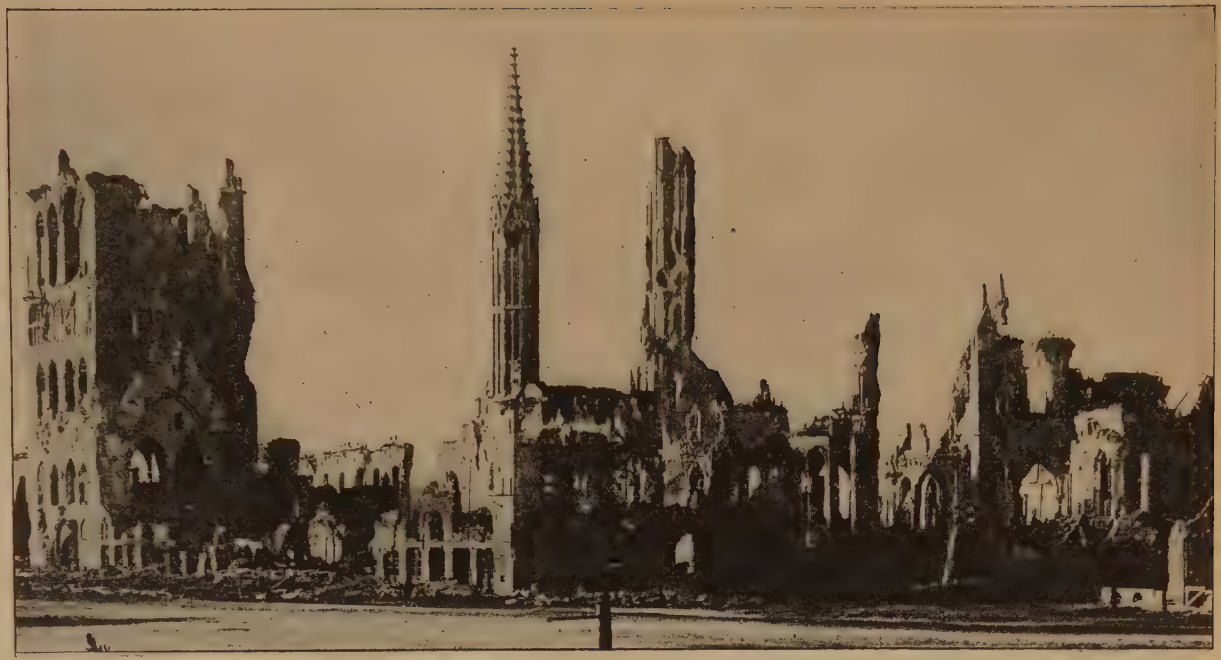
There was no cessation in the eastward sweep of British troops north of Péronne. On a front of approximately fifteen miles northward they forced the passage of the Canal du Nord and made substantial progress to the east. Germans posted on the eastern banks tried to check the advance with machine-gun and artillery-fire, but British and Welsh troops overwhelmed their resistance and passed beyond them to high ground east. Englishmen and New Zealanders, fighting further north, captured Ruyaulcourt and reached the outskirts of Havringcourt Wood, east of the canal. Still farther north British troops entered Moeuvres. The city of Lens had been definitely evacuated, but the British for some days refrained from occupying it because of gas-fumes that remained there. German Armies from the Marne salient were then retreating on a front of nearly twenty miles north of the Vesle, the passage of which had been forced by French and American troops, who at some points had gone three

[2] Cable dispatch from Gerald Campbell in The *Sun* (New York).

miles north of the river. The French made big gains northeast of Noyon and were driving Germans before them between the Canal du Nord and the Oise. The German High Command now faced the necessity of surrendering broad belts of territory in order to cut losses, reorganize and refit forces and regain a certain strategic freedom of action.

The British approached Cambrai from the west and southwest, as well as from the northwest. No natural or artificial obstacle remained between them and their objective. The French advanced toward Ham, reaching the outskirts of Guiscard, half way between Ham and Noyon. French and American troops had crossed the Vesle in force, pursuing the retreating Germans on a twenty-mile front. Mangin's operations north of Soissons had made a German retreat to and beyond the Aisne inevitable. He had brilliantly fought his way against stubborn resistance to the western end of the Chemin-des-Dames, and had nearly surrounded Coucy-le-Château. He was up to the Hindenburg line here and was threatening one of its chief bastions—the Forest of St. Gobain. The whole German western line from Reims north had become insecure. To find a new line which would not crack under Foch's continuous pressure was now the great German problem.

On September 5 the Allies smashed forward on five sectors of the 140-mile front between Ypres and Reims. On almost all this line the beaten foe was giving way. Under terrific hammering from Franco-American guns the Germans began a general retreat from the Vesle between Soissons and Reims. The Allies advanced three miles on a twenty-mile front from north of Soissons to a point east of Fismes. Mangin, by a new thrust northeast of Soissons, stormed forward more than a mile on a ten-mile front and captured 1,500 prisoners. The British fought their way across the Canal du Nord and the Tortille river at nearly all points on a twenty-mile front between the Scarpe and Somme. Northeast of Noyon the French hurled the enemy back along a ten-mile front, pushing forward a few miles at several points and reaching within three miles of the railroad center of Ham. The French were within a mile and a half of Chauny. Chauny and La Fère were in flames. In Flanders the Anglo-Ameri-



YPRES AFTER ITS MANY BOMBARDMENTS

cans pushed their lines to within a mile and a half of Armentières, capturing six towns. The enemy's broken forces were retreating steadily before fresh Allied onslaughts.

There had been no serious fighting at Lens. Pushing carefully into its outskirts, patrols met no opposition from south and west. From the great slag-heaps they had had a commanding view of the city, the broad main streets strewn with brick and the débris of wrecked buildings, houses mere stumps, with no resemblance to places of habitation. None of the public buildings was distinguishable, nor was the cathedral. Lens as a city simply was not. On the south side only four feeble men remained, wandering stealthily among brick heaps. Lens in one sense was the most important of all these towns for the French because Lens meant coal. The economic gain to France, and indirectly to England, that promised eventually to result from its actual recapture and occupation was almost incalculable. But its mines and mining machinery all lay in ruins. It would take some years to restore them.

The tide of war had now set so strongly in the Entente direction that the British advance along the Scarpe already threatened Douai and Valenciennes where, with the Lens fields, were the largest deposits of coal in Continental Europe, extending from Valenciennes through Charleroi, Namur and Liége to Aix-la-Chapelle, Dusseldorf, Essen in the Rhineland and Dortmund in Westphalia. There was also a considerable coal deposit about 150 miles to the south near Saarbrucken, part of it in the Rhineland and part in German Lorraine. From these deposits were mined four-fifths of all the coal used on the continent, exclusive of the British supply. The only part of the deposit on the French side of the line—that near Valenciennes—produced 30,000,000 tons, out of 40,000,000 tons mined and 60,000,000 tons consumed in France.

The German people were told little or nothing of the great German defeat that occurred on Sedan Day. An official German *communiqué* said it was "a quiet day," and war-correspondents celebrated it by denying the accuracy of the Entente *communiqués*. Nor were the Germans permitted to know how French and Americans on that day were driving

German armies out of positions in southern Picardy and from the sector between the Vesle and Aisne. So rapid was the progress of the French in Picardy and the French and Americans from Soissons eastward toward Reims, that the German retirement was having the appearance of a rout. From the old Noyon sector to Soissons the French reclaimed thirty villages, crossed the Somme Canal at several points, and were standing only a short distance from Ham whence roads led to St. Quentin and La Fère. On the south they

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COAL-MINE MACHINERY WRECKED IN FRANCE

made crossings of the Ailette and were skirting the great wooded region which acts as a barrier to a direct attack on Laon, the Chemin-des-Dames and the western Aisne defenses of Germany. South of Fresnes, on the fringe of the forest of Coucy, the French penetrated the lower Hindenburg line.

French and Americans, for more than eight miles, had driven the Germans across the Aisne and were standing on its southern bank. Eastward toward Reims, almost to the gates of the cathedral city, the German line was falling northward. From Bazoche they moved six miles to Viel-

Arcy, while from Fismette they penetrated more than three miles to Barbonval, which was a mile south of the Aisne. Southeast of Arras, and south of the Somme below Péronne, the British dug more deeply into the German front on various sectors, especially toward Cambrai and immediately north and south of Péronne. At Frapelle, on the eastern end of the battle-front in Lorraine, more than 3,000 shells, many of them gas-projectiles, had been sent by the Germans into the American line.

In following up the German retreat from the Vesle to the Aisne, bridges across the Vesle became of high importance to the Americans and French, not only because they enabled the main body to come close on the heels of smaller advanced detachments, but they assisted in bringing forward artillery and needed supplies. How to throw numerous bridges across at the most advantageous points and in the quickest time became the problem of engineers who had to make detailed examinations of both banks under hazardous conditions. They made maps showing every tree and rock, and especially places where banks were marshy and so were impassable for guns, as well as of others where the firmness of the terrain was favorable for bridges. Ever since the Vesle front had become stationary, engineers and bridges had been of the greatest importance to infantry for making crossings by night, despite shelling and gas, and were of service in bringing food and ammunition to men lying along the road from Bazoches to Fismette, or under tree-trunks felled by artillery-fire in woods near the Château du Diable.

Engineers became so experienced that they laid bridges faster than German artillery could shoot them to pieces. When a force of infantry was ready to cross, engineers had six or seven bridges ready to throw over the river within a few hundred yards. Frequently there was not a single casualty. These bridges were made of timber taken often from destroyed and captured German aerodromes, but usually from trees felled for the purpose. Often bridges were arched, or they were made with only a couple of planks attached to uprights of lengths that varied with the depth of the stream at the point where they were used.

The fifth of September was the fourth anniversary of

Joffre's memorable summons to the Allies on the Marne. The anniversary had come around auspiciously, with the Germans in full retreat between Ypres and Reims. Four years before on the Marne the world was saved for liberty. Men for all future times would have spoken of the miracle of the Marne in 1914, even if the Allied blow of 1918 had not fallen near the scene of Joffre's victory. They would have called it a miracle because of the dramatic transformation it made of disaster into victory, and not because it was something beyond human power. It was not chance that shattered the dream of German militarism, but human imagination and reason burning to a climax. Joffre beat Moltke, as he had planned to beat him. In the same way Foch crusht Ludendorff, as he planned to crush him during those four dark months in 1918 when the world seemed once more within the German grasp. If the decision of four years before had imprest itself on the imagination as a miracle, what should we not say of the repetition in 1918 of that great event, on the same stage, largely under the same French leadership.[3]

In July, 1918, German armies, having beaten the Allies in four great battles from Ypres to Reims, had crossed the Marne once more to deliver a final blow. Four years before, as was the case now, they were beaten primarily by Foch. Their undoing came when they turned their face away from Paris to the east; Kluck when he swerved southeast at Senlis, Ludendorff when he ordered the offensive against Reims and Châlons. On both occasions the Ourcq meant the beginning of German disaster; on both, the Allied blow fell on the exposed or weakened right flank of the Germans. Most striking of all was the fundamental cause of the two disasters. The Germans in both cases were beaten by French armies of whose existence the German General Staff had been unaware. In the case of Joffre, one of these French armies did not exist until within a few days of the battle, and another came into being only as the battle begun; the army with which Foch broke the center at La Fère Champenoise having been first grouped together about a week before it came into action. For Foch on July 18, 1918, reserve armies did, how-

[3] Dispatch from G. H. Perris to The *Times* (New York).

ever, exist, but German arrogance refused to recognize the fact; indeed, the German War Minister had said in the Reichstag that Foch had no reserves.

When Joffre was retreating from the Belgian frontier, in 1914, his thoughts were all on taking the offensive, and mass of maneuver was his instrument. He had tried it in the last days of August around St. Quentin and Amiens, but the means were not yet adequate. Then he tried it on the Ourcq and the Marne with success, Foch commanding one of his two reserve armies. When Foch, in 1918, became generalissimo, the Allies had handed over to him one-third of their armies to use as Joffre had used a maneuvering mass; that is, to save and win the war by imagination acting on an athletic force. Not imagination alone was essential to Foch, even more important was stedfastness; unshakable resolution in the face of adversity; impregnable confidence while biding his time; in other words, that iron will possession of which the Germans had arrogated to themselves along with much other alien property. One could not return too often to the remarkable demonstration which the French soul gave to the world. Imagination, vivacity, clarity, had always been conceded to it; but the rockbound purpose of the French under Joffre and Foch became a fresh revelation to a generation educated in the tradition of the volatile Gaul.

Hard as it was to apportion greatness, of the two men it was perhaps Foch who rose the higher by the test of inexpungable resolution. For Joffre events had moved swiftly. Between disasters on the frontier and the beginning of the first Marne battle, only thirteen days elapsed, but Foch in 1918 had to hold fast during four long, dark months. Joffre had to brace himself against the effects of a single mighty blow, Foch to stand the strain of repeated hammer-blows. Joffre had behind him a country whose energies were still in their first effort, Foch a country tried by four years of war, but whose national morale he had to keep intact, not against swift disaster, but against an implacably approaching disaster spread over four months. In those four months Foch kept patiently at his work, saving men, collecting new forces, planning and waiting.

On September 6 the Germans started a new retreat on an

eighteen-mile front from near the junction of the Oise and Ailette to the Aisne east of Soissons. Mangin pursued them relentlessly, driving into Coucy Forest three miles in the direction of the great St. Gobain massif which protected Laon and was the principal bulwark of the German line on the Western Front. More than thirty villages were recaptured. The Allies penetrated far beyond the front they had held in the previous winter, reaching a point south of

BRITISH OFFICIAL PHOTO.

TOMMIES IN A RUINED CITY

Finding a piano among the ruins, one of their number has opened it and begun playing

Fresnes, with little resistance, the main body of Germans falling back behind the Aisne. The British on both sides of Péronne fought their way forward two miles beyond the Canal du Nord on a ten-mile front, and northeast of Noyon, Humbert drove the Germans back on both sides of Ham. North of Noyon the French crossed the Canal du Nord and the Somme. Further south they took the villages of Frétoy and Maucourt and outflanked the Germans in Ham. In

Flanders British and Americans pushed forward for new gains on both sides of Armentières and near Givenchy reached the old winter battle-line of 1917-18.

Ludendorff had failed, but his failure if finally reduced, was the failure of the whole German system—a system which was a rigid inheritance from the elder Moltke, whose chief conception had dominated all German strategy in this war. Moltke's conception was that armies acting on the offensive can always impose their plans of operation on an enemy, the corollary of which was that one need not bother about an enemy's plan, when the enemy can be kept busy conforming his activities to your own. Moltke had a beautiful and simple scheme, but it would not work when opposed by a keen and resourceful mind like Foch's; it led to undervaluation of the enemy and that had often been fatal in war. The elder Moltke would have been defeated at Vionville in 1870 had the French been led by Joffre or Foch, instead of by Bazaine. In the drive to and below the Marne in 1914 the younger Moltke fell into the same blunder. He underestimated the power and leadership of French armies and when he came out of his dream his campaign was a wreck. Ludendorff did the same thing. He refused to recognize that Foch had a strategical reserve and that he was preparing to use it. He put Allied counter-offensive beyond all the possibilities and so went blindly into Foch's trap in the Marne salient. Since then he had been doing nothing but extricating himself from the various salients into which, since March 21, his armies had been driving in order to reach Paris and the Channel ports. Ludendorff's retirement from the salient was not finally completed until after all his other salients had been broken, squeezed, and emptied, which showed what obstinacy and pride of opinion had inbred in the German High Command. Ludendorff took defeat in an embittered personal spirit. That fact alone stamped him as a second-class soldier.

Soon it became evident that infantry as such had ceased to exist in the German army. The fighting unit was no longer the rifle; it was the machine-gun. German forces were being organized, not on the old basis of a certain number of rifles to a force, but on a basis of machine-guns.

The rifle, instead of being the primary fighting weapon, had been relegated to inferior importance. Not only had the Allied armies to reckon with German machine-guns and the development of their use by skilled gunners, but with plans, as shown in captured documents, for a great increase in the number of machine-guns. The machine-gun used was a light gun which could be carried by one man, and was operated by two men. The type was a Maxim. This development turned the whole German infantry force into a force of Maxim machine-gunners. Not that every two men had a Maxim; one Maxim was given to every eight soldiers and six were equipped with rifles, for purposes similar to those for which artillerymen carried a revolver.

Once more, as in every move since July, the outstanding feature of Allied progress was high intelligence. A great coordinating mind was at work inspiring leaders in separate war-theaters. Time, which had been hard on so many commanders, had been propitious to many Allied leaders who had come down from the first days of the war. Foch, who helped so largely to win the first battle of the Marne, was now the directing genius of the war. Castelnau, who by his defense of Nancy in August and September, 1914, aided also in winning the Marne, was now on watch in Lorraine. Between Foch and Sir John French at the first Marne stood Franchet d'Espérey, and d'Espérey was now a victorious commander in the Balkans. Haig and Allenby, Allenby having just defeated the Turks overwhelmingly in northern Palestine, both had shared in the glory of the first Marne. Thus it was that veterans of the first month of the war seemed likely to finish the war for the Allies.

German aviation plans had received a serious setback from a shortage of materials essential to planes, but Germany was making frantic efforts to keep up with the Allied program, seeking motors in Switzerland and Scandinavia and combing the entire Fatherland for aluminum and fine woods. One new German type of plane succeeded another, but each failed to establish anything like equality with American, British, French, and Italian forces. In addition to lack of material there was an alarming shortage of petrol. Special orders were issued to aviators to abstain from unnecessary flights.

Joy-riding behind lines was classed as a most serious offense. A traveler from Cologne told in Holland on August 25, of Allied air-raids on that city and the terrible experiences of the population. He was in Cologne when bombs fell upon large public buildings, killing sixty persons. On a big hotel bombs caused injury to 124 persons. Others fell near the cathedral. Coming on top of bad news from the Western Front, the population became deprest. Citizens were saying that while Germany had had a chance to win before the Americans entered the conflict, the opportunity had been lost and could not be retrieved.

American bombing-machines raided Conflans at this time, dropping forty bombs on the railroad-yards, despite heavy anti-aircraft fire. Chemical factories at Mannheim and the railway-station at Frankfort were successfully attacked by the British. Mannheim was the center of a great chemical industry. The raid did such damage that it might compel German armies, for a time at least, to do without certain war-chemicals. Planes almost grazed the chimneys of munition plants. The attack was one of the most successful enterprises the British had undertaken. Particular attention was given to military objectives, such as poison-gas works, docks, railways, and aerodromes. Nearly all attacks were delivered at low altitudes, thus insuring results, for there could be nothing indiscriminate in the attacks; they had definite objectives, which were to disorganize and delay the production and delivery of munition stores. The British had conclusive proof of the great practical and moral effects of these raids. During July 96 raids were made into Germany. A total of 81 tons of bombs were dropt, as compared with 74 raids and 61 tons during June. Coblenz was raided three times, Mannheim four, Metz five, Oppenburg seven, Saarbrucken three, Stuttgart two, Thionville five and Trèves two. At all these places railways and factories came under the fire of airmen. That the morale of the Germans in raided districts was greatly lowered was shown by frequent demands of West German newspapers for stronger defenses. Many Germans moved into the interior of the country.

During the last week of August seventeen separate raids into German territory were carried out. While extensive

damage was known to have been done to important military objectives, the most striking feature of the week's work was the raid on the Mannheim poison-gas factories. British airmen, flying at a height of only 200 feet, narrowly avoided collision with factory-chimneys. Altho this maneuver increased the personal risk of the airmen it enabled them to direct bombs with great accuracy. Every bomb released was seen to hit its target. Scarcely a day passed in August without at least one raid upon vital German strongholds. Sometimes three or four raids were made in a single day. Often a squadron attacking one of the objectives, say at 11 o'clock in the morning, would be relieved by another squadron at noon, that would carry on the work until relieved by a third. This operation was conducted over one of the most strongly fortified military positions in Europe and against defensive organizations of the most formidable kind. Elsewhere during three months the following numbers of raids had been made upon German works: at Zeebrugge, 72; at Bruges, 63; at Ostend, 64. In addition to these, a great number of separate attacks had been delivered on other military works in the coastal area.

By September 6, the French had captured Ham and Chauny, with their railroads and highroads leading into St. Quentin and La Fère, and across the Canal du Nord had penetrated at various points to a depth exceeding six miles. The little forest of Coucy, the western portion of the great wooded sector east of Laon that had stood as a barrier to a direct advance eastward, had been entirely taken. Across the Ailette, Mangin's forces had reoccupied additional points which brought them abreast of the old German defense-line, and, outflanking a German line in this region and one north of the Aisne, were now pressing backward toward the Chemin-des-Dames. French troops on the north bank of the Aisne reoccupied their old trenches and eastward the Americans made progress in the region of Villers-en-Prayères and Révillon, which brought their front appreciably nearer the Aisne and gave them a position which dominated territory southeastward toward Reims.

September 8 completed the first month of Foch's northern offensive. It saw the Germans in their last ditch in northern

France, with every prospect of a long and dangerous retreat ahead of them. Since Napoleon was defeated at Leipzig and began his final retreat to France, it was questioned if any other month had been of equal importance in military history. Just as Leipzig broke the Napoleonic legend of invincibility, shattered the illusion created by Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, and Wagram, so these battles in August and September, 1918, almost too grandiose to be measured by place names, extended as they were over the broad expanse of Ile-de-France, Picardy, and Artois, and extending to Flanders and the Champagne, had broken the spell of the impersonal German military machine which, in the period between August, 1914, and July, 1918, had carried its victorious standards from the English Channel to the Gulf of Riga and from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The Allies in the north had taken more than 100,000 prisoners since Rawlinson struck the first blow on August 8, and more than 150,000 prisoners and 2,200 cannon since Mangin turned the last German offensive into a crushing disaster on July 18. They had liberated 2,000 square miles of French territory, and in the north were advancing over ground untrodden by Allied troops since the retreat from Mons, forty-nine months before.

GEN. SIR HERBERT PLUMER

In the strategy which Foch followed all the eggs were not in one basket as they had been in each of the blasting-through operations that Ludendorff had undertaken against four distinct sectors of the Allied front. Foch was able to vary his pressure, to multiply his offensive combinations. In September he still had Plumer's army in Flanders free

for a stroke against Lille and he had the newly organized American army in reserve for an operation on the Meuse. When the Germans should have reached the still unbroken part of the Hindenburg line south of Cambrai, the strategical situation would not abruptly change. The remnant was no stabler than any other part had been. All the magic it once possest had gone out of it. The Germans would have to fight to hold any part under much the same handicap as that under which they had been fighting since July 18—the handicap of a confused defense. They had not yet solved Foch's strategy. And we had the Marshal's own word for it that having now wrested the offensive, he would pursue it without a halt.

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M. JUSSERAND, THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES

On September 6, Americans held a double celebration—the anniversary of the Marne victory and the birthday of Lafayette. The two anniversaries had a joint significance for freedom-loving peoples all over the world. Lafayette crossed the Atlantic to offer his sword to Washington, not only because he wished to aid a people struggling for their independence, but because he was fired with enthusiasm for liberty. Now that American troops were pouring across the Atlantic to fight with the descendents of their revolutionary Allies, they were fired with enthusiasm for the same cause. "We are here, Lafayette!" Pershing had said in July, 1917, when visiting the hero's tomb in Paris. Americans were in France, not primarily to pay a debt, but because, after the lapse of nearly a century and a half, the cause of human liberty again hung in the balance. Except for Joffre's valiant army the cause for which Lafayette and Washington contended might easily have been lost. Tributes to France

and testimony to the friendship between France and the United States were paid in New York. Great impressiveness was added to the exercises in the Aldermanic Chamber of the City Hall by cable messages from Marshal Foch, Marshal Joffre, President Poincaré and General Pershing.

The hall was draped with American and French flags and over the speakers' table hung a full-length picture of Lafayette. On the floor of the chamber, and in the galleries, were American soldiers with French, British, and American sailors. In the evening a dinner was given at the Waldorf, at which Ambassador Jusserand and other speakers hailed the approaching dawn of victory and messages from President Wilson and others were read. Colonel Roosevelt was the principal speaker at exercises in the City Hall in the afternoon and brought the audience to its feet when he made a statement as to the drastic terms of peace that must be dictated to Germany. Introduced as "an ideal American whose family was a source of pride to the entire nation" he was applauded for several minutes by an audience which had risen to its feet. Besides this gathering there was another in Union Square, at which the principal speaker was former Judge Alton B. Parker, and where American soldiers, French bluejackets, and British marines formed a square about a naval band which played during the exercises. Five hundred children from settlement-houses were a leading feature at another celebration held on the Mall in Central Park above which eighteen airplanes sailed in battle formation.

Foch's armies two days later virtually reached the Hindenburg line along the entire front from Arras to Soissons. Except for small areas before St. Quentin, German rearguards had been withdrawn to the main system of defenses. Americans on the Aisne front struck a new blow between the Aisne and Reims, capturing a village and fifty prisoners. German artillery replied sharply to the American assault. The retreat northward toward the Chemin-des-Dames was resumed and German rearguards who had been left to contest the ground between the Aisne and the canal were forced to fall back. The British drove onward two miles on a twenty-mile front between Cambrai and the Somme and prest eastward toward St. Quentin. French armies on the British

right kept pace, pushing forward two miles toward the St. Quentin Canal and capturing villages. They almost touched the Hindenburg line at La Fère.

German military strength had long been imposing; all that preparation could do with machinery, discipline, and organization had been done and done over and over for forty years before the first Marne, and again for many months before the offensive of 1918. But despite its power in all the small things that made a great and well-nigh perfect machine, the German High Command had been wrong when it came to reaching big decisions. Every time it was within the power of its armies to achieve victory, its mistakes led to failure in getting a decision. In August, 1914, Germany took the world by surprize and achieved a long list of opening victories. Napoleon never opened a campaign better; but pitiful results were seen when the campaign ended. The same failure occurred at Verdun in 1916, and in Picardy in March, 1918; a big first rush passed over Fort Douaumont in 1916, and another reached the environs of Amiens in 1918, just as another had approached the forts of Paris in 1914. By all the laws of military science each success should have won the campaign, but instead of that the Germans were driven from Paris back to Soissons in 1914; Fort Douaumont was retaken in 1916 and the Germans were now retreating far east of Amiens. With three great chances they had made three great failures.

Foch had a definite objective constantly before him. He was not working to an immediate decision because the Germans were still too strong for him to obtain one. So far he had made no attempt to break completely through the German lines. That would have involved too great a concentration of men on a short front, and consequent loss of freedom of action. Thus he retained a maximum of freedom and great flexibility, which contrasted strangely and strongly with the rigidity of the German plan, as exhibited between March 21 and July 15. His objective was the German army just as Grant's was Lee's army and not Richmond. As all his writings on war proved, he was not only a soldier of the highest order, but one of the few military psychologists in Europe. He saw defeat, not primarily as a physical fact

but as a mental condition, and he was working largely against the peculiar mentality against which he was contending—the mentality of the German soldier. He was installing into the German army the habit of thinking of defeat, and thus was creating a mental condition which would inevitably lead to a military victory for himself. His conviction was that a man who thinks he is beaten is half beaten before the fight starts. The German soldiery had seen its lines struck at every point between Arras and the Marne and by an endless succession of blows, and at every point had seen thousands of prisoners taken, everywhere a recession of the fighting front eastward and, in spite of all resistance, the flood had continued. Numbers had made no difference. The Germans had been using 24,000 men to the mile on a front of eight miles, but all to no avail. After such an experience, an army would begin to acquire the habit of thinking in terms of defeat, which was the mental condition Foch was endeavoring to bring about.

A military deadlock, secured by an adroit defensive, was still a possibility, and Ludendorff had intimated that his armies in the north were behind positions which they were going to defend. The test was coming with Lille, Douai, Cambrai, St. Quentin, La Fère and Laon. Could Ludendorff hold them? Foch's amazing achievement had been only a limited achievement as yet. His real task still remained to be accomplished, for Ludendorff's main force had not been broken, and real victory could come only when it was broken. Local successes like Foch's were useful, in that they permitted the victor to gain valuable communications and occupy important positions. They deprest the enemy's spirit and raised the victor's. Foch had the offensive, he had won preliminary victories, and he stood on the threshold of greater things, while Ludendorff had had to accept a defensive battle under adverse conditions, or continue his retreat. Should he accept battle he might be beaten completely; should he retreat, after declining battle, his only gain would be that the evil day had been put off, that a decisive engagement had been postponed.

When Ludendorff arrived at the old Hindenburg positions, he had hardly settled down in them before he received notice

to move on. In spite of all his efforts La Fère was about to be encircled and so was St. Quentin, and in abandoning them, he would have to retire beyond the Oise and from La Fère up toward Guise. Between St. Quentin and La Fère he was fighting with the Oise at his back—a dangerous situation for a defense uncertain of itself. Despite bad weather Foch was going forward with undiminished vigor. The Hindenburg line had become little more than a form of expression, for something that had been held in awe, but was no longer a thing to conjure with. It was now so

LAON CATHEDRAL ON THE HILLTOP
No harm had come to it during the war

punctured, torn, and even overrun that it practically had no military value. St. Quentin had been outflanked, and two German counter-attacks on the western slopes of the Chemin-des-Dames had been frustrated by French forces. In Flanders, the British had swung forward on both sides of Armentières, pushing for the banks of the Lys north and west and making new gains east of Neuve Chapelle. On both sides of the Oise the French pushed nearer La Fère, stormed dominating heights and forts on the north, and drove their way into the Servais station, below the river, on the outskirts of the Forest of St. Gobain. Under continuous blows the Hindenburg line was apparently crumbling away. Deep cuts had been made in it below Arras, at St. Quentin and west of Laon.

Rain-storms had now fallen along the Western Front. Roads across that land of desolation had to be mended for lines of communication which now were the arteries of war, and to make some form of habitation in the wilderness possible. Enormous labor was involved. Engineers and labor-battalions were kept hard at work in rain and mud, making old dugouts habitable, draining old trenches, putting up new huts in place of those burned or destroyed. Haig at this time issued to his armies a memorable proclamation. "The capture of 75,000 prisoners and 750 guns in the course of four weeks' fighting," he said, "speaks for the magnitude of British efforts." "We have passed through many dark days together," he added in conclusion. "Please God, these never will return. The enemy now has spent his effort."

After eight weeks to a day Foch's offensive came virtually to a pause, altho both British and French on isolated sectors from Flanders to Soissons recorded advances. Torrential rains had turned lowlands into impassable marshes and the badly worsted enemy had rushed large reinforcements forward. During those eight weeks Allied troops had cleared out almost in its entirety the enemy-held territory from the Marne to the Aisne, from Soissons to Arras, and were standing across a large part of the old Hindenburg line and were virtually upon the remainder of it, while in Flanders deep salients which had threatened the English Channel ports had been beaten back eastward and the enemy had been ex-

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ZINC WORKS IN NORTHERN FRANCE BEFORE THEY WERE DESTROYED

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SITE OF THE ZINC WORKS, AFTER THEY WERE DESTROYED

pelled from vantage points from which he expected ultimately to make his drive to the seaboard and thus cause a diversion of the transport service from England to southern France. Until the rains began to fall there had been no let-up, notwithstanding the fact that the German High Command had stiffened its resistance everywhere, discarding infantry units as such, turning them into machine-gun companies, and bringing up large numbers of guns of all calibers. From July 15 to the end of August the Germans had expended or lost as much ammunition as they could produce in six months.

Wanton destruction of villages and towns by the Germans continued as they relinquished them to the advancing Allies. First, public buildings and private dwellings were looted, everything portable of the slightest value being carried off and then the towns were deliberately wrecked with high explosives and fire, the work done with German thoroughness. The country recovered became a wilderness. The wasting of an entire countryside in cold blood, as a mere gratification of malice, was not war, but mere savagery and not only excited the indignation of every humane and chivalrous being, but placed the authors in the position of criminals. The crimes committed by the Germans in retreat had in fact hardly any parallel in modern history. Some of the acts of Tilly and Wallenstein in the Thirty Years' War, and the wasting of the Palatinate by order of Louis XIV offered a semblance, but the former acts lacked the methodical quality which was horrifying in this German conduct, while the latter was comparatively trifling as regards cities and towns. Germany's barbarous deeds were without the smallest pretext of military advantage. They originated in sheer malice, or black hatred of the French, and a desire to inflict the last possible atom of mental agony and material damage upon them. They manifested a spirit of stark rapacity which had made even the Crown Prince of Prussia, the heir to the Imperial throne of Germany, and at least one of his brothers, common looters.

It was not possible as yet to estimate the price America had paid for her share in these battles that had turned the tide. Our casualty lists as far as they had been secured

could relate only to events as late as the last week in August, but these meant that our losses in the fighting that drove the Germans back to the Vesle and the Hindenburg line—the second battle of the Marne, the battles of Picardy, and a good part of Mangin's operations north of Soissons—had become known. On August 1 our total reported casualties were about 14,300, of which the deaths, in action, by disease, on sea, etc., were about 5,620. On September 1 our total reported casualties were 36,335, of which the deaths were 11,700, figures which covered all American sectors, so that to take these figures as the cost of all the battles we had participated was a liberal allowance. Roughly we might say that 20,000 American casualties had been the price of our share in the victories of the five weeks between July 18 and August 21, and those victories had shattered the German hope in the west. Of these casualties the dead were about 6,000. Before the war ended, however, our casualties of all kinds were close to 300,000, and more than 75,000 American soldiers lay dead from battle or disease.

At one time everything had gone well for Germany in every part of the war-area. Her fortunes rose like waves of the sea, and they threatened to submerge the Allies and their civilization. East and west, south and north, like waters rolling over a sandy beach and climbing over reefs, with blind, relentless impartiality, they had swollen over Belgium, France, Russia, the Balkans, and Mesopotamia, submerging opposition, and drowning hope. But the tide had now turned, the wave had reversed itself, had "broken on the beach," as Foch, in March, had said it would, and men saw Germany wrestling with breakers, not in one quarter alone, but on each and every one of many fronts. The change wrought under the genius of Foch, beginning at Kemmel Hill and Château-Thierry, and then on the Piave, in the splendid success of the Italians, became the turning-point, not in France alone, but as respected the entire situation. On all sides the Allies rode the crest of a mounting billow of success.[4]

[4] Principal Sources: William L. McPherson in The *Tribune* (New York), The *Morning Post* (London), The *Evening Sun*, The *Times*, The *Sun*, New York; the "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*, The *Tribune* (New York); The *Times*, *The Fortnightly Review*, London; The *Evening Post*, The *Journal of Commerce*, New York.

## VI

## PERSHING ELIMINATES THE ST. MIHIEL SALIENT —A NEW, BUT FUTILE, TEUTONIC BID FOR PEACE

September 12, 1918—September 20, 1918

EARLY in September there was a feeling in the air that great events were impending elsewhere on the front, to which more substance was added when the American Secretary of War Baker arrived in France. For some time it had been believed that the Americans under Pershing, now completely organized, were about to strike their own first blow. Nearly all the American troops hitherto brigaded with French and British had been withdrawn and assembled elsewhere as a single army, the resources of the European Allies having become so great that Foch was able to set aside so large a surplus.

The United States had now sent abroad more than a million and a half of men. The formation of these into a distinct American army under Pershing had given to the unified command another complete army, impressive in numbers and important in the fact that its freshness and vigor were the greatest single possession of the Allies. The Germans looking back could see nothing but shame and failure for their great scheme and all their dragnets could not bring forward anything to compare with the fresh manpower the United States had now brought into France. Col. Frederick Palmer[5] noted that, up to this time, two American divisions, side by side, "were the most that we had ever had under American command in an active battle-sector." All our fighting thus far had been done by divisions; and our divisions, with two exceptions in the Marne salient, "had been alternated with French divisions," while our First and Third Corps, "in their brief experiences

[5] "America in France" (Dodd, Mead & Co.)

in the Marne salient, had been under a French army commander." In the St. Mihiel salient, however, "we were directing French troops instead of having our troops directed by French generals." We had in St. Mihiel eight American divisions in line. Aside from the First, Second and Forty-second (Rainbow Division), we had the Fifth, the Eighty-ninth and the Ninetieth National Army divisions, the Eighty-second, and another National Army division "which was to mark time at Pont-à-Mousson." By itself on the other side of the salient acting with French Colonials for a short objective, was the Twenty-sixth, or "New England," Division.

For some time this First American Army had been concentrating in the Woëvre plain under the personal command of Pershing, but little had been said about the place of rendezvous. Pershing's army was principally concentrated along a ten-mile front from Faye-en-Haye to Xivray, its right resting on the Bois-le-Prêtre, overlooking the Moselle, its left touching the Forêt d'Aprémont, where it linked up with the French, who were entrenched round the apex of the St. Mihiel salient. Immediately in the rear of the American line was the Commercy-Pont-à-Mousson *Chaussée*, which afforded an excellent line of lateral communication between various American units, and was connected with Toul and Nancy by good country roads. On the western face of the salient, French and American troops were brigaded together, holding the line of the Côtes de Meuse from Les Éparges down to Spada, and thence across the Meuse to Chauvancourt, where the Germans had a bridgehead on the left bank of the river. The German general, Fuchs, was believed to have six divisions in line, two of them in the apex of the salient.

On September 12, a day when 13,000,000 Americans were registering for the second selective draft, a day that lacked only one day of being Pershing's birthday, a day that was close to the fourth anniversary of the German occupation of the St. Mihiel salient, and only ten days later than what Germans for nearly fifty years had celebrated as Sedan Day, Foch struck his blow at the St. Mihiel salient with American troops assisted by the French, and captured the salient in

about twenty-four hours, the Germans taking headlong flight. This operation transcended anything that our troops had previously attempted. Having made good at Château-Thierry and in helping to drive Ludendorff from the Marne salient, and having served brigaded with the British, the Americans had turned their efforts separately to another salient and won a great initial success essentially alone.

St. Mihiel was a natural fortress. Since being seized by the invading Germans in 1914 it had been held by them, and all efforts made by the French to recover it had failed. Owing to strongly made positions the Germans had remained there, a thorn in the side of France. In 1918 nothing had happened in that sector since the battle between Americans and Germans at Seicheprey in April. Further south, however, on September 11, in a sharp fight northwest of Colmar, in Alsace, Americans had repulsed a heavy raid following an intense German barrage in which more than 200 mine-throwers were used against our trenches, and 1,000 big caliber artillery-shells were thrown into our communicating lines and back areas. In a fierce fight at close range, in which grenades, bayonets, and rifles were used, the Germans were finally driven off, but in their retreat they hastily threw down flame-throwers, rifles, and other supplies, which were captured. On the Lorraine front, however, the Germans, despite a large number of patrol operations, had been unable for weeks to take a single American prisoner.

Six automobiles loaded with war-correspondents, five representing London newspapers and sixteen American newspapers and press associations, after receiving summons from American headquarters, had reached the St. Mihiel salient on the night of September 11. It had taken them ten hours to go from Château-Thierry to the St. Mihiel battle-zone, but they were eager to go, since for weeks they had been waiting for word to make the journey. On arrival they were invited to confer at 9.30 with an American officer in charge of the intelligence section. With large maps pinned upon walls, they stood around him in a circle while he explained in detail exactly what the American troops operating with the French expected to do the next day. Nothing was withheld from them regarding the projected operations.

METZ
FORTIFIED AREA OF METZ
FRANCE
LORRAINE
St. Mihiel
Thiaucourt
Pont-a-Mousson
Chambley
Vigneulles
Hattonville
Woël
Lachaussée
Avillers
Dommartin-la-Montagne
St. Maurice-sous-les-Côtes
Billy-sous-les-Côtes
Hattonchâtel
Vaux-les-Palameix
Dompierre-aux-Bois
Deuxnouds-aux-Bois
Lacroix-sur-Meuse
Lamorville
Bannoncourt
Spada
Rouvrois-sur-Meuse
Senonville
Dompcevrin
Maizey
Les Paroches
Chauvoncourt
Savonnières-en-Woëvre
Buxerulles
Woinville
Varvinay
Heudicourt
Buxières
Maizerais
St. Baussant
Montsec
Lahayville
Richecourt
Marvoisin
Xivray-et-Marvoisin
Loupmont
Varnéville
Apremont
Scheprey
Nonsard
Essey-et-Maizerais
Lamarche-en-Woëvre
Beney
Xammes
Bouillonville
Parmes
Euvezin
Vieville-en-Haye
Villers-sous-Prény
Prény
Norroy
Champey
Vittonville
Arry
Lorry-devant-le-Pont
Mardigny
Marieulles
Vaudières
Bouxières-sous-Froidmont
Chambley
Les Ménils
Héminville
Morville-sur-Seille
Port-sur-Seille
Mousson
Atton
Montauville
Regnieville-en-Haye
Montrichard
Fey-en-Haye
Remenauville
Onville
Vandelainville
Waville
Arnaville
Villecey-sur-Mad
Rembercourt-sur-Mad
St. Julien-les-Gorze
Dommartin-la-Chapelle
Charey
Hagéville
Xonville
Bussières
Gorze
Dornot
Corny
Fey
Fournoy-la-Chétive
Rongueville
Arey-sur-Moselle
Jouy-aux-Arches
Augny
Marly-sur-Seille
Cuvry
Coin-les-Cuvry
Chesny
Pouilly
Fleury
Orny
Pournoy
Vany
Loivilly
Silleghy
Goin
Pagny
Louvigny
Allemont
St. Jure
Longeville-les-Cheminot
Raucourt
Eply
Clémery
Nomeny
Jussy
Sey
Lessy
Borny
Grigy
Sablon
Peltre
Magny-sur-Seille
Vaux
Ars
Gravelotte
St. Marcel
Vionville
Flavigny
Tronville
Puxieux
Mars-la-Tour
Ville-sur-Yron
Hannonville-au-Passage
Latour-en-Woëvre
Labeuville
Marcheville
Rupt-en-Woëvre
Mouilly
Les-Eparges
Tresauvaux
Mesnil-sous-les-Côtes
Mont-sous-les-Côtes
Rambucourt
Fresnes-en-Woëvre
Rigiville
Haudiomont
Ronvaux
Ville-en-Woëvre
Manheulles
Pintheville
Maizeray
Moulotte
Allamont
Hennemont
Ranzières
St. Remy
Thillot
Dommartin-la-Montagne
Vièville-sous-les-Côtes
Seuzey
Ft. de Troyon
Creue
Lavignéville
Chaillon
Ft. du Camp Romains
Bislée
Ancemont
Ft. des Paroches
La Grande
Ft. de Liouville
Hannonville-sous-les-Côtes
Doncourt-aux-Templiers
Hudonville-les-Lachaussée
Jonville
Sponville
Latour-en-Woëvre
Saulx-en-Woëvre
Wadonville-en-Woëvre
Hautmont
Dampvitoux
Meuse
Moselle
Scey
Borny
Grigy
Peltre
Chesny
Pouilly
Fleury
Orny
Pournoy
Vany
Goin
Pagny
Allemont
St. Jure
Raucourt
Eply
Clémery
Nomeny
Reference
American Daily Lines of Advance
French Colonial Troops
Enemy Defences
Numbers indicate Divisions in Line
Highways
Railroads
Tramways
Canals
SCALE OF MILES
KILOMETERS
The Taking of
THE ST. MIHIEL SALIENT
Engraved from Map
Accompanying Report of the Commander-in-Chief,
November 20, 1918
THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N.Y.

LORRAINE'S TRIBUTE TO AMERICANS
Monument erected by popular subscription to three Americans, who were the first to give their lives for the Entente cause

They were told exactly where various corps headquarters were, where each division-commander could be found, and had their choice of time for making trips to scenes of activities. All this was done three hours before the opening shot was fired.[6]

At the end of the conference the officer said: "Gentlemen, it is now midnight; in one hour our artillery begins and at 5 our infantry starts." Just at 1 o'clock, when it was raining hard, thousands of guns began to speak. Five minutes to 5 came, then four minutes to 5, and then barrage with explosions so fast that one could not distinguish the

[6] Cable dispatch from Raymond G. Carroll to The *Sun* (New York).

individual voice of any gun; shells were shrieking triumphantly. At one minute of 5 came a pause and at 5 men started, many thousands all bound north. Smaller guns were still going, making a rolling barrage. Above their staccato sounds could be heard the booming of big rifles, making death and destruction for Germans. As it was growing light the rain stopt, off to the eastward clouds lifted and the sun showed its head. Through the mist one could see far off hills that had been made into veritable forts. One heard a gun roar from overhead and saw a squadron of airplanes sweep northward.[7]

A real American offensive had begun on the Western Front, with Secretary Baker there to witness it. The main attack was launched from north of Toul where American troops had been longest, and where they had distinguished themselves several months before at Xivray and Seicheprey. The immediate purpose was to squeeze out the salient. By driving north five miles on the south side of the salient our troops could cut the only railroad leading from St. Mihiel to Metz, and put the Germans who were in and near St. Mihiel into a narrow pocket out of which they could escape only by a hasty retreat. Valuable help came from the French, but it was essentially an American attack, and was planned and controlled by American Staff-officers. The American troops represented almost every State in the Union and every element of the great American army, from veterans who had been tried in fire to men who before had known only quiet sectors. It was exceedingly hard ground on which to operate. The Germans held a position that had been fortified with every device known to trench-warfare. It was as strong as any German position on the Western Front and abounded in woods which were natural machine-gun nests. The country was rough and hilly and intersected by numerous streams, of which the Rupt de Mad, running past Seicheprey, was one of the most important. In the preliminary thrust, ground was gained on both sides of the triangle and at its apex where stood St. Mihiel. Altho the advance was swift and sure and gains were made in excess of four miles on the southern side of the battle-area,

[7] Cable dispatch from Edwin L. James to The *Times* (New York).

cavalry far outstript tanks and footmen. Thiaucourt, Bouillonville, Pannes and several other towns on the southern leg of the salient were captured in the initial dash, while on the west at the northern edge of the pocket the village of Combres was captured and the environs of Dommartin-la-Montagne reached. In the south, Americans penetrated into the Heights of the Meuse, while the French, cooperating from the west, fought their way into the outskirts of St. Mihiel. The fighting front at the beginning aggregated twenty miles—eight miles on the western side and twelve on the southern. After the bombardment, the Americans swung forward aided by tanks and airplanes, broke a concentrated defense, took 8,000 prisoners and captured Pannes, Nonsard, and Mont Sec. On the northern sector the French reached the line of Dommartin and St. Mihiel.

The most remarkable feature of Foch's generalship was the way in which he had succeeded in keeping his offensive alive after he first launched it in July, and at the same time continually extending his front of attack. He had opened a new phase of war in the west by opening up successively new fronts of attack in such a way as to give the harassed enemy no rest. As soon as the counter-offensive on the Marne had exhausted its impetus, Haig struck south of the Somme. When the enemy rallied on his old defensive lines from Chaulnes to Roye, he began to press him north of the river and force him to retreat to the Hindenburg line. At the moment when he had completed the shortening of his front, taken shelter behind formidable defenses and checked for the time being the Allied offensive north of Reims, Foch delivered this new blow against him in the south.

The attack sought to do three things: first, to continue the strain upon the Germans by attacking in a new sector when activity in the Hindenburg region slowed down, thus retaining the general offensive by compelling the Germans to conform to Allied strategy; second, to abolish a locally awkward wedge in the Lorraine front; and third, to prepare the way for later operations against the Briey iron district from French lines around Verdun, but all the operations on the Western Front were only details in Foch's main scheme, which was to break and scatter the armies of Germany. He

had seized the initiative and rained blow after blow on Ludendorff and had now shifted his activity from Flanders to the east of Champagne, or from his left to his right flank.

For four years the Germans had had here a valuable bridgehead, but their position was too circumscribed to permit them to advance out of it while the French lacked the necessary men to attempt an offensive which if successful could have had only a local benefit, because the great German fortress of Metz behind it precluded any idea of material advance in that region. As to reaching the Briey iron district, from which Germany had been deriving a large share of the iron used in her war manufactures, it was plain that no advance could be undertaken from Verdun toward Briey so long as the Germans held the St. Mihiel salient which would have been on the flank of such an advance. But once the St. Mihiel salient could be pinched out such an offensive further north became possible. An advance of a dozen miles from the Verdun front would have brought Briey within range of French heavy artillery, and probably prohibited further exploitation of its mines by the Germans.

St. Mihiel was essentially a local operation, with limited objectives, its relation to the western and main fields of operation subordinate. It was a maneuver intended to compel the Germans to weaken their front in Artois and Flanders, to confuse and further disorganize their plans and consume their reserves, to keep them busy and prevent any effort on their part to regain the offensive. It was not an operation aimed at Metz, which was the strongest single position in the world, nor was it a thrust toward the Rhine. Any such thrust would have had to be made from the east side of the Moselle south of Nancy. Thus St. Mihiel was not a major offensive at all, only one more of Foch's many blows; an advance which, if it could be held, would change the whole aspect of the Western Front, remove the single wedge the Germans had been able to maintain in the French dike on the old frontier, and greatly facilitate later operations toward Briey, or into Alsace-Lorraine between Strassburg and Metz. The Germans offered little resistance. Occasionally stray machine-gun and automatic rifle-fire were met, but it was evident that the main forces had withdrawn

BEAUMONT

Beaumont lies in the St. Mihiel sector. In the foreground are seen German trenches; in the background, on the left, is Dead Man's Curve

to the second line and hence the American losses were very light.

Dawn had seen a whole squadron of tanks moving out of their shelters. At one point near Seicheprey, machine-gun and automatic rifle-fire swept down upon the American right flank. But tanks and artillery were quickly moved in that direction and the Americans went steadily forward. By 7 o'clock the tanks had disappeared in a smoke-cloud over the ridge in front of Seicheprey and the Americans started forward through the valley. The sun was now streaming across the fields, casting shadows from the melancholy wrecks of villages. The American army had attained its majority. Of its fighting quality there had been no doubt since Château-Thierry. Our men had received their brevet when Foch picked them out, with the flower of the French, for this new effort against Ludendorff. To them fell the honor and responsibility of delivering what was thus far the most ambitious of Foch's offensives measured in miles. The gains made were in proportion to the size of the task. Pershing's men advanced eight miles deep in virtually twenty-four hours, which was a record for all offensives on the Western Front, whether Allied or German. Nearly ten thousand captives during the first drive meant well above twenty thousand prisoners if precedents held to the end.

Not alone had the salient been taken; Pershing's men gained all the important towns, villages, and strategic positions in the sector, and advanced guards were standing on the banks of the Moselle at Pagny, looking across the stream into German territory. The southern outer fortifications of Metz were only four miles distant. Large numbers of Germans had been taken prisoner—more than 13,000 were soon counted. Many guns and machine-guns and tons of ammunition and other war-stores were in American hands. From Hattonville, in the foothills of the heights of the Meuse, across the salient eastward to Pagny, the Americans had closed the mouth of a big sack extending southward to St. Mihiel, trapping within it by their fast advance all the enemy forces that failed to take refuge in flight. They were astride the railroad running from Commercy to Verdun, and the Thiaucourt-Metz and Nancy-Metz railroads were in their

hands. Beginning in the northwest and crossing the salient eastward they held Fresnes, Les Éparges, Hattonville, Preny, Pagny, and all the ground lying between them. Mont Sec, the dominating height in the center of the salient from which much trouble had been expected, had fallen without fighting. The Americans had eliminated the St. Mihiel salient, had reached the German frontier, with the enemy swept back thirteen miles, and giving evidence of having withdrawn with expedition. Some 8,000 of them had gone out at the wrong end of the salient and so were captured.

The surprizing thing was that the Germans did not fight. They had not expected an attack, altho they had read speculations in their newspapers about it. When the Americans struck them only one first-class division was in front. Resistance came only in spots, and then it was not of a determined nature. It was in no sense comparable to the rear-guard actions fought by the Germans in getting out of the Marne salient. One American division captured 3,000 prisoners, some of whom said they did not care to fight any more. During the night, said a Berlin report of this operation, "the evacuation of the St. Mihiel salient, which was liable to encirclement, and which had been under consideration for years, was completed without interference."

Before the Germans retreated they had forced almost every male inhabitant between the ages of 16 and 45 to accompany them for service in the German army. Houses were entered and great stores of loot carried away. The inhabitants who remained had been absolutely ignorant of events in the previous four years; they had known only what their captors chose to tell them, and had sad stories to tell of their condition through long years of German control, their isolation from all news of relatives and all world happenings. The civilian population, consisting almost wholly of women and children, welcomed the visitors warmly, especially the American Secretary of War, Pershing, and Pétain, who visited St. Mihiel a few hours after it was captured. Aged women and girls crowded about the two generals to express their thanks and pay homage to their deliverers. It was not that mere curiosity had been satisfied; it was an emotional outburst. A military band was brought in and the "Marseillaise"

played. All normal restraint in the presence of visitors broke down completely. Women crowded forward ostensibly to shake the Secretary's hand, but instead they kissed his hands and wept, and then joined in a chorus of "Vives!" There were no speeches, but Secretary Baker responded briefly to expressions of gratitude, often half-hysterically uttered by women and children. Aged men and women, as they seized and kissed the hands of officers, cried and laughed, children imitating their elders. For French soldiers the greetings were even deeper. The troops themselves were more affected than those whom they had helped to deliver.

Pershing, Pétain, and Baker made their entry into St. Mihiel over a war-wrecked bridge of which only a few rickety planks were left—the sole means of entry, for it was impossible to enter the town elsewhere, except on floats. Not only had the stone bridge over the Meuse been blown up years before, but three makeshift bridges had been smashed by shell-fire. Some 2,400 civilians were delivered from captivity. There was not a sober face in St. Mihiel that day. The Secretary wore a soft hat, a khaki-colored raincoat, and boots, on his arm a red brassard with embroidered golden eagles, such as was worn by American Staff generals. French flags flew from buildings, which here and there showed shell-holes. Most civilians explained how they had saved their best clothes for four years for this day of deliverance. American baseball shoes covered the feet of many. Children after having been prisoners indoors for four years by German orders, ran up and down the streets, shouting and waving tricolors that had been hastily dug out of hiding-places, wildly enjoying their first freedom in the sunshine since September, 1914. Some forty poilu engineers who crossed the Meuse on an improvised bridge built of fishing skiffs, and so entered St. Mihiel, were the first French soldiers whose feet had trod the streets of the town for four years. About 2,400 old men, women, and children fell on their knees and kissed one by one the faces, hands and feet of their deliverers, having with them a French flag that had been buried four years before.

St. Mihiel was only partly damaged. The French had

always refrained from firing on it because they knew civilians were there. The part adjoining the river was almost entirely gone, but scores of houses elsewhere were little hurt. The attack had been such a surprize that the Germans were unable to undertake their usual work of wreckage, but they laid hands on everything they could carry off. Sheets and blankets were torn from beds and loaded on wagons. Fire was set to a few houses, but the inmates invariably extinguished the flames. Houses on both

U. S. OFFICIAL PHOTO.

BURIAL OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN FRANCE

banks of the river were looted. Within the salient there was considerable wealth before the war and many handsome homes from which the Germans had taken paintings and furniture with which to adorn their own residences. Even farming implements and household utensils—in fact, everything of value—was gone.

Such Germans as escaped capture in this operation were in small units, rarely larger than companies, who never offered to fight unless encountered by some patrol, and even then their resistance was slight. The very spirit of retreat

had entered them. There were scores of instances where men, and even officers, profest satisfaction at their capture. When the operation began there were from 90,000 to 100,000 Germans inside the salient. They escaped at one time at the rate of about 1,000 every hour, but the pincers closed and trapt many. Among the Allied nations, deep interest was taken in the American victory, not so much for its results, which were substantial and valuable, as for the fact that an American force had gone into battle acting separately and had won a victory. Germany would now begin to realize, as she never yet had done, how serious in character was the new factor in the war. More was destroyed at St. Mihiel than a German salient. Pershing shattered at a blow the vain German pretense that the resources of the United States would be of little or no account on European fields of war. He had shown that the Americans were as quick and apt to learn the art of war as they had been to develop the pursuits of peace. The Germans, after all their attempts to minimize the importance of the American factor in the war, had virtually run away from the first American army that faced them.

In the German flight whole divisions of our men pursued them northward at such a pace that wireless and telegraph communication was lost for hours. The whereabouts of our men were often unknown until couriers, or little carrier-pigeons, arrived to announce the overthrowing of some fresh and distant objective. The American cavalry-patrol looked like Indian fighters in their cocked tin hats, utterly lacking alike the dashing plume effect of French cavalry and the stateliness of British. It was a hard-riding, uncompromising mass and gave a splendid account of itself. In dense, dark-green woods, from St. Mihiel to Vigneulles, the final act of the swift and thorough victory went on methodically. The length and breadth of the salient became a bustling beehive, each bee doing his allotted task. It was an inspiring thing to stand on Mont Sec, which had been the German rock of Gibraltar for nine months, and beyond which the Americans had gone far. The further one looked over the scene below the stronger became the impression of how well fortified this whole place had been. It abounded in dugouts deep,

strong and well built, and in many steel and concrete pill-boxes. American officers and soldiers ate German food and drank German beer in captured dugouts.[8]

To get a full understanding of the victory one had to go over the battlefield from the old front line of battle at Seicheprey. Passing Remières Wood on the right, one rode through trenches, then into No Man's Land and across to Lahayville, Sainteaussant and Richecourt—villages that thousands of Americans had looked at longingly since January 18, when the first American force took over this sector. The defenses were as strong as those on the Somme, the Chemin-des-Dames or any other battle-sector of the Western Front. The greatest defense of all was Mont Sec. Nothing ever said about that solitary peak had conveyed an idea of how it dominated and looked down upon Seicheprey, Xivray, Beaumont, Rambucourt, Bouconville. The Woolworth Tower dominates New York no more than Mont Sec dominates its surroundings. From its height Germans on a clear day could see every American who walked in a road or trench.

One realized what a veritable fortress it was, not only because of its steep wooded sides but its dugouts which were subterranean chambers capable of holding thousands of men, and built of steel, concrete, stone, and brick in a mountain side. Some had been built in 1915, and were ornamented with the German coat-of-arms. They were now littered with maps, papers, clothing, and knick-knacks, and had been furnished in great comfort with beds, chairs and pictures. Dugouts had fine porches, and pretty tables, with a splendid view spread out to the Meuse heights. The whole top of the mountain was elaborately interlaced with paved paths railed with rustic woodwork, leading to observation posts with outlooks at every angle. At Château-Thierry, through captured maps, Americans had obtained complete information as to the exact whereabouts of everything in Mont Sec.[9]

Pershing's victory astounded one by what might have been called its classic completeness. It was clean-cut and simple. The only parallel was Nivelle's stroke of two years before at Douaumont, with its one-day harvest of 10,000 prisoners.

[8] Cable dispatch from Cameron MacKenzie to The *Times* (New York).

[9] Cable dispatch from Thomas M. Johnson to The *Sun* (New York).

The American assault had moved with precision, with nothing of awkward delays at isolated points such as had often added to the cost of an offensive. Along every road from the line of departure to the heart of German positions, the schedule had held. One hundred and fifty square miles of enemy territory were "snipped off at one clip." In other words, the plans were well laid and the leadership was perfect. Not only the "strikingly restrained" tone of Pershing's *communiqué*, at which London wondered, but the character of the victory which the *communiqué* chronicled, called attention to a phase of the American spirit not at all apprehended in Europe's ordinary understanding of things American, as savoring too much of boasting.

Foch had followed the larger strategy of Grant in 1864, by attacking all along the line, in Lorraine, the Champagne, Ile-de-France, Picardy and Artois, and he was soon to attack in Flanders. When Ludendorff retired behind a part of the Hindenburg line, he expected that Foch would follow him and wear out his resources, but Foch shifted his field of operations and inflicted defeat in another field. After St. Mihiel Foch was now free to launch an offensive elsewhere—in the direction of Briey and its iron mines, for example, without danger to his southern flank, or eastward from Nancy between Metz and Strassburg without anxiety for his communications with Paris. An advance to Briey would have been a local operation with a purely limited objective—the iron mines; an advance from Nancy the beginning of an invasion of Germany, which would have compelled the Germans to retire out of northern France and western Belgium.

The American success in abolishing the St. Mihiel salient had really laid the foundation for a future American offensive into Alsace-Lorraine and one which would have taken place in November, 1918, had not the armistice made it unnecessary. It had been planned to be a decisive feature of the year's campaign. As a test of the striking power of the American army, fighting under its own leadership, the St. Mihiel operation left nothing to be desired. It was notable, too, as exposing again the growing confusion and indecision of German strategy. The German High Command still insisted that it was conducting its retirement out

of the St. Mihiel pocket "according to plan." But a plan which left 20,000 prisoners behind, out of possibly 70,000 or 80,000 troops concerned in the "retirement," was one to which no general staff, except a much flustered one, would think of acknowledging a parental relation, much less of having planned. In two months Foch had accomplished more toward a definite victory than the Allies had been able to accomplish in the preceding four years. He was still pushing his drive for Laon, the necessary preliminary to which was the envelopment of the St. Gobain bastion, where Mangin was plodding away at his task of weakening German positions south of Laon.

On September 15, the army under Pershing resumed its advance from its base across the old salient on a front of thirty-three miles, extending from northeast of Verdun, at Abaucourt, to the Moselle, some miles south of Pagny. The gain made was in general between two and three miles, with a maximum penetration of four. American patrols were operating two miles or more in advance of the front and Germans in retiring were making little resistance, apparently withdrawing to positions where they could better protect the system of railroads which fed Metz from west and south, some of which, notably those which centered at Conflans, were under direct American fire already. Six German divisions—a total of 60,000 men, a rifle strength of 36,000—were operating in the salient. The Germans had brought up two divisions, thus reducing their strength in the west to 191, plus four Austrian divisions and some dismounted cavalry.

In quarters which a German general had occupied in the St. Mihiel salient were found individual coffee-cups, with an iron cross and pictures of the Kaiser and Hindenburg on them, silver forks with Hindenburg's likeness engraved on the handles, electric lights, call-buttons, and an elaborate assortment of food. In the haste of the general's flight two cases of beef were left behind. In his office were large numbers of copies of a pamphlet for distribution among soldiers, telling them how to use weeds for food, a long list being named with recipes for making soup from nettles and salad from sorrel. Captured letters said the Americans were in

the war as a sporting adventure, or sort of big picnic. It was argued that the Americans should have cast their lot with the Germans, should have picked a winner and so sided with the Kaiser. One letter from an officer's wife took him to task for remonstrating with her for having asked for 700 marks with which to buy a new dress, as that was the cheapest she could get one for under prevailing high prices in Berlin.

On a hill north of St. Mihiel was a new graveyard filled with massive marble tombstones and monuments. It stretched from a roadside far up the hill, on top of which stood an enormous black iron cross. All those graves were German graves. Much care had been lavished upon them and much wealth spent. Flowers bloomed everywhere. In one end was a lion's statue twenty-five feet high, with a lifted paw pointing toward Paris. Here slept fully 6,000 Germans, under dates all the way from 1914 to 1918. A scion of German nobility lay in a mausoleum; in a big vault lay a colonel, and here and there was a private beneath a monument of many tons. No British, French or Americans had been buried in any such style in France. Loving phrases and gallant tributes were carved on many stones. French quarries nad yielded the stone, but the work was done by sculptors from Germany. Stretching for a quarter of a mile were hundreds of tombstones, as straight in line as German precision could make them. Up the hill, in terraces, ran their white lines to where the lion and the iron cross crowned the scene, the whole grand and massive, but not beautiful.[10]

It was no figure of speech to say that the Americans were in sight of Metz. From a hill near Norroy, on a clear day, one could see its steeples, and from an observatory post east of Pont-à-Mousson one could see a considerable part of the city, and the emerald valley of the Moselle as it wound and curved from France into Germany. In the distance was Metz, its great single-spired cathedral projecting into the sky. Through glasses one could see trains crossing a railroad-bridge, high factory chimneys with jumbled buildings beneath them. On the right and left of the city great hills

[10] Cable dispatch from Edwin L. James to The *Times* (New York).

rose abruptly from the suburbs and told where formidable forts sat on guard. Bursts of sunshine through shifting clouds brought out small white houses on hillsides. Equally discernible were forbidding black gun positions in hill fortresses. Fort Wagner was nearest. It was this fort that Americans bombarded. The Germans had concentrated great anti-aircraft defenses in a circle around the city. With Allied aeroplanes hovering over them at night the spectacle was inspiring.

The Germans admitted their defeat by September 18. "We know," said the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* "that our losses in prisoners were due to the extensive use by the enemy of tanks. More than 1,000 armored cars of all sizes participated." Squadrons of American-manned tanks had operated for the first time on a large scale in the St. Mihiel salient, and had played an important and dramatic part in the defeat of the Germans. Divided into brigades—light, intermediate, and heavy—the tanks swung onto the field of battle immediately after the barrage. Before the day ended they had entered the villages of Nonsard, Pannes, Lamarche, and Binney considerably ahead of infantry. Early in the action difficulty was experienced in getting to the front sufficient gasoline, altho a great squadron of gasoline-tanks had been prepared. These tanks were attacked by the enemy or got

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AMERICAN WOUNDED RECOVERING AT A PARIS HOSPITAL

mired, but American ingenuity came to the rescue. Barrels of gasoline were trundled and rolled over roadless fields by daring volunteers. Bobsleds became more efficient than wagons, since they could be dragged over mud without being mired. Hundreds of gallons of gasoline were conveyed on them to the fighting tanks. Tanks occasionally got as much as two miles ahead of infantry, and threw consternation among the Germans. Part of their success was due to the intensive training of drivers, who had been taught to operate blindfolded, and guided by signals from gunners, which sometimes in battle might be found necessary if drivers should be blinded temporarily by splashes of mud. For several days before the offensive, tanks had been operated in an interior town, while civilians watched them with amazement, having no knowledge of what they portended. Before the battle tank-crews had final instructions on a hypothetical battlefield mathematically divided into debarking points and supply depots.

There was small consolation for Germany in the fact that not man-power but tank-power had smashed the St. Mihiel salient. Tanks were not the ultimate factor in Foch's victories, but they played a vital part; and once more it was a sad reflection in Germany that in its own art of war an English idea had upset all their traditions and calculations. English ingenuity like French brains had beaten the Germans at their own game. German devices, such as 42-centimeter guns, *U*-boats, and Zeppelins, had failed to bring victory. The comparatively humble tank was in a fair way to force a decision against them; more than that, it was significant that nearly a year after Byng introduced the tank, the Germans had been unable to adapt it for their own purpose. Whether this was due to lack of ideas on Ludendorff's part or to a shortage of raw material, the effect was the same. Ludendorff learned to know their value. After the war he declared that they were the chief cause of Germany's defeat.[10a]

The tactical and strategical results of the American victory were both considerable. The restoration of direct com-

[10a] Berlin interview with Ludendorff printed in The *Evening Post* (New York).

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THE HINDENBURG LINE AT BULLECOURT

Three trench lines and communications are here shown, with acres of wire entanglements in the left foreground protecting first-line positions. Beyond Bullecourt runs the St. Quentin Canal and tunnel, which was taken late in September by the Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth American divisions

munication between Verdun and Commercy along the Meuse Valley railway would now facilitate sending supplies to the French army covering Verdun, while the recovery of 150 miles of French territory brought relief to long-suffering inhabitants whose homes had lain devastated by the invaders for four years. The moral effects of the victory were even more important. Young as soldiers tho they were, the Americans had shown themselves more than a match for the Germans at their own game of war. Military success is catching, and one victory would lead to another. Taking the month's operations as a whole, the Allies had good reason to congratulate themselves on the success of efforts which had removed the menace to Paris and the Channel ports, and compelled the Germans to abandon the offensive without any hope of recovering the initiative. The war had not yet been won, but the worst was over; the tide was rolling back.

There were at least two sectors in which events indicated other attacks to follow St. Mihiel—the La Bassée sector, in front of Plumer's army, and the Mülhausen sector, in front of an American force, east of Belfort. Plumer's army had not yet been actively engaged in fighting since Foch took the offensive. His was the only British army of which this was true. A successful advance by Plumer, not greater than that of Pershing at St. Mihiel or Rawlinson in the Somme region on August 8, could have won Lille for the Allies, compelled the Germans to evacuate the coal regions about Lens and the industrial regions of Flanders. This would include loss of Douai and Cambrai and a retreat to the frontier.

Ever since 1914 the French had occupied east of Belfort and Thann a considerable strip of German territory and an admirable jumping-off place for a push through Mülhausen to the upper Rhine. Hartmannsweilerkopf and the surrounding high ground were still in French hands. Where the French had not turned positions over to Americans, French guns commanded Mülhausen, and an advance of fewer miles than was made at St. Mihiel could win the second city of Alsace-Lorraine and make a substantial advance toward the liberation of the two "lost provinces." The moral effect of such a success, both in France and in Germany, would have been great, greater perhaps than any

military advantage. Foch had in Plumer's army and in American forces east of Belfort, facing the Rhine, two fresh armies. If Ludendorff had reinforced two armies, facing British and Americans on his extreme flanks, he would have had to weaken his center to do it.

Eight Americans were killed in Lorraine on September 17, when a clearing hospital was hit by a German shell. The Germans threw a large number of high-explosive projectiles on two successive nights, and finally hit a large tent, where gassed patients were confined. A large red cross against a field of white lay on the ground before the hospital, so that it could have been observed by German aviators. Officers said the Germans deliberately fired on the hospital, as there were no woods near by, where troops could have been concealed. The majority of Americans killed were privates who had been gassed west of Vandières. Several members of the Medical Corps were among the injured. The shell struck the hospital about midnight.

Great were the preparations the Americans had made for the attack on St. Mihiel. Five thousand miles of wire were laid, and six thousand telephone instruments were connected with these wires. Such work made it possible for officers whose troops had flanked the foe's trenches to telephone back informing artillery of the exact location of enemy-trenches and in a few minutes bringing a deluge of metal. Several thousand carrier-pigeons supplemented the Signal Corps. The Corps men took more than 10,000 feet of "movie" films depicting war scenes and many thousands of photographs. Extensive hospital facilities were arranged, including 16,000 beds in advanced areas, and 55,000 further back. Less than 10 per cent. of the hospital facilities were needed. Our guns fired approximately 1,500,000 shells, while 4,800 trucks carried men and supplies, assisted by miles of American railroads of standard and narrow gage, the cars pulled by engines marked "U. S. A." One spot alone yielded 4,000 shells for 77's and 350,000 rounds of rifle-cartridges. Twelve thousand hand grenades were found in another place.

Nothing could indicate more clearly the hopelessness of the Teutonic cause than the succession of failures which

had befallen it in a few months. The breakdown of their great western offensive had not been offset by successes in other fields. No matter in what direction the Kaiser turned his uneasy eyes, he could perceive only increasing weakness and disaster. On all sides a victorious foe was exerting an unrelenting pressure. Austrian divisions, sent to stave off collapse in France, had been taken from the Italian front at the imminent risk of a new disaster along the Piave. Bulgarian troops, sent for the same purpose, were learning of an advance upon the Macedonian front, which threatened to

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IN THE ST. MIHIEL SALIENT
**The stream shown is the Rup de Mad**

envelop the entire Vardar Valley. Turkey, reduced to extreme weakness by starvation, misgovernment, and the assaults of Allied armies, was trembling for her existence, with a storm gathering in Mesopotamia and Palestine in which British, Indian, and South African troops threatened to overwhelm her. In Siberia newly landed Allied armies were helping the Czecho-Slovaks brush aside the Bolsheviki and clear the way to the heart of Russia. On the Archangel front the Reds had been defeated and were retreating. On all sides the walls of the Kaiser's fortress, the last stronghold of autocracy and militarism in Europe, were caving in.

After the salient had been wiped out, and American soldiers were within four miles of the outer forts of Metz, the peace-professing hand of Germany was again seen when her submissive ally, Austria, broke out with a new proposal. It would be easy to end the war by "a calm exchange of views," said Baron Burian, the Austrian Foreign Minister, in a speech made in Vienna and cabled in some fulness to Entente countries. Austria had spoken for peace before—and obviously with full consent from Germany—notably through Count Czernin. "Our adversaries," said Baron Burian, "need only to provide an opportunity for a calm exchange of views—some sort of direct informative discussions is thinkable which would be far from being peace negotiations—for discussing and weighing everything which to-day separates the belligerent parties, and no further fighting will, perhaps, be needed to bring them closer together." In the Entente view, Germany, as a condition precedent to any such "calm exchange of views," would have to renounce for all time her plans for domination in the East. In the meantime, her designs for dominating the West were in process of being attended to by the military forces of Great Britain, France, Italy, and the United States.

Germany, it was now clear, was not to control Belgium or Holland; that is, the mouth of the Rhine was not to be hers. Besides that, she would have to restore Alsace and Lorraine to France, and Austria would have to relinquish Italy's conquered provinces. German power was destined henceforth to be confined to German territory. Foch's victories had made that clear. Germany, as a menace to free nations, had shown herself an enemy of the manifest destiny of mankind. Her boundless conceit, her confest ambition to make herself the ruler of the world, her contempt for law and for the rights of men and nations, with a thousand proofs that her boasted Kultur merely masked the soul of the barbarian, had made it the imperative duty of the Allied Powers to put her under bonds to keep the peace, the only bonds that would assure the world's safety, which meant her reduction to powerlessness through the undoing of the plans her autocratic rulers, civic and military alike, had made for the control of other nations. Beyond renunciations and restorations

of territory in the West, Germany, to satisfy her enemies, had to give up the East, as a minimum of the Allied demands, as a condition of peace. The situation involved also the breaking up of the conglomerate Austrian Empire that had long over-stayed its time, for that land was under Germany's thumb, and to have 125,000,000 people in the heart of Europe directed by one imperialist will and moved by a common purpose meant that the world would not be safe. The Allies had recognized the Czecho-Slovaks as a nation, the Jugo-Slavs were to be freed, and President Wilson had said that an independent Polish State should be erected, guaranteed by international government. Finally, there was to be no throne in Finland for a German king.

On September 14, a definite and official note came from Austria for a conference of the Powers, and Germany made a definite offer to Belgium. The formal plea of Austria was for a "confidential and non-binding discussion for the conclusion of peace." Here the Entente saw the "peace-offensive" which had been expected ever since German arms began to stagger back before the fierce thrusts of British, French, and Americans under Foch. Washington and Allied capitals accepted Austria's call for a conference as merely another German attempt to get better terms than she might expect after the war should it have been carried across the Rhine. Austria, whose people had long been war-weary, had been called upon to bear the onus of making the overtures in order to save the face of Germany. None of the Entente governments took the request seriously. The United States and the European Allies had made their peace aims so clear that there could be no mistaking them.

President Wilson received Austria's peace note on the evening of September 16, and within half an hour gave Secretary Lansing his reply, rejecting the proposal in an answer sharp and decisive and in fewer than one hundred words. The reply was made public immediately after the delivery of the official text of the Vienna note, having been written some hours earlier after the President had read a newspaper version of it, and was as follows:

"The Government of the United States feels that there is only one reply which it can make to the suggestion of the Imperial Austro-

Hungarian Government. It has repeatedly, and with entire candor, stated the terms upon which the United States would consider peace, and can and will entertain no proposal for a conference upon a matter concerning which it has made its position and purpose so plain."

Official and diplomatic Washington rang with jubilant enthusiasm over the character of this reply. There was not a discordant note either there or in any part of the country. Regardless of party affiliation, members of Congress and leading officials voiced the most complete satisfaction over the refusal of the President to be drawn into any discussions with the Central Powers. Senators and Representatives were equally unanimous in praise of what the President had done. The consensus of opinion was that he had sounded a true note—one that, as some members expressed it, "would ring around the world." Senator Lodge, Republican leader in the Senate, made a notable and eloquent speech in support of the President.

One German newspaper[11] admitted that in Wilson's reply to Austria "his cold and cutting scorn, his cool rejection, had a more overwhelming and annihilating effect than all the official phrases which the man in the White House could have employed," and complained that "a policy of annihilation had found absolute expression in him." The words "destruction" and "annihilation" had formed part of the daily vocabulary of official and semi-official Germany in all discussions of Entente war-aims, but no official had ever ventured to tell the German people precisely what it was that the free nations at war with Germany were determined to annihilate. The German people were not going to be annihilated, the German States were not going to be destroyed, unless destroyed by the Germans themselves.

The venerable Hertling complained that on February 22 he had accepted in the Reichstag Wilson's four peace principles, but that neither Wilson nor the Allies had taken any notice of them. What Hertling omitted to say was that his adhesion to some of the rather general and less important Wilson principles came less than a fortnight after Russia had been strangled by Germany at Brest-Litovsk, in

[11] The *Rheinische-Westfalische Zeitung.*

spite of a Reichstag resolution against annexations and indemnities, and that the German people thereupon had gone mad with lust of plunder, and imposed on Russia an indemnity of $1,500,000,000. After the Brest-Litovsk incident Entente faith in the German Government was no longer possible. If anywhere there was left a temptation to believe that Germany had suffered a change of heart since she compelled the Russians to accept the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the Entente could reflect on the apology Hertling made in the same speech for Germany's conduct in Belgium in 1914 as excusable under the law of necessity; in his serious consideration of the "faked" documents discovered in Belgium in 1914 as an afterthought; in his showing once more Germany's incomparable gift for rubbing into the world's sore places the salt of moral obtuseness. Hertling had long been recognized as a clever factor in the German Government, his duties being to supply camouflage while the brutal war-lords went forth with poison-gas, the torch, and the sword, to overrun and ravage neutral states and assassinate women and children.

The Hertling valedictory—for that was what the speech turned out to be—was surcharged with familiar German plaints—an unappreciated longing for peace, Germany's position as the victim of Edward VII's policy of encirclement, of French lust of conquest, and of Yankee money worship bent on the subjugation of European idealism. As for Germany's crimes in Belgium and Russia, we were asked to accept as equivalents, the violation of Greek neutrality by the Entente, and British rule in Ireland. Perhaps there was still a credulous element in Germany that could be deceived by these ancient formulas—a remnant to whom it was still possible to say without creating laughter, that *U*-boats were "restricting the transportation of men and material from the United States."

Not as a direct reply to Hertling—indeed hardly with any reference to his speech at all—President Wilson, on September 28, at the launching of the Fourth Liberty Loan in New York, outlined as the price of peace which would be exacted at the proper time from Germany, impartial justice to all nations, the instrumentality to secure it being a league

of nations formed, not before or after, but at the peace conference. An audience of 5,000 rose and cheered him when he said that Germany would have to "redeem her character, not by what happens at the peace table, but by what follows." "It would be folly," he said, "to leave the guaranty to the subsequent voluntary action of the governments we have seen destroy Russia and deceive Roumania." Again he said:

"We are all agreed that there can be no peace obtained by any kind of bargain or compromise with the Governments of the Central Empires, because we have dealt with them already, and have seen them deal with other Governments that were parties to this struggle, at Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest. They have convinced us that they are without honor and do not intend justice. They observe no covenant, accept no principle but force and their own interest. We can not 'come to terms' with them. They have made it impossible. The German people must by this time be fully aware that we can not accept the word of those who forced this war upon us. We do not think the same thoughts or speak the same language of agreement. Germany is constantly intimating the 'terms' she will accept; and always finds that the world does not want terms. It wishes the final triumph of justice and fair dealing."

President Wilson's speech drew a statement at this time from Mr. Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary. He found Mr. Wilson's main theme to be that, if the world was to make sure of peace, "it must come to some arrangement by which malefactors, or would-be malefactors, are to be kept in order by a league of nations," and if the plan was to be carried out "the only time to do it effectually was the moment when peace itself was being forged by the labors of the victorious Powers." [12]

[12] Principal Sources: The "Military Expert" of The New York *Times*; The *Tribune*, The *Sun*, The *Times*, The *Tribune*, The *Evening Post*, New York; The *Times* (London), The *Evening* (New York), *The Fortnightly Review* (London), Associated Press dispatches, The *Journal of Commerce* (New York).

*("Foch's Great Victories" continued in Volume VI, beginning with an account of the Meuse-Argonne battle.)*

# ITALIAN, BALKAN, PALESTINE AND MESOPOTAMIAN FRONTS

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THE MATTHEWS-NORTHRUP WORKS, BUFFALO, N. Y.

THE GERMANO-AUSTRO-RUSSIAN BATTLEGROUND
Farthest advance of
Russians: ++++
Germans and Austrian - Hungarians: ——
Railroads thus:
Forts thus: ✦ ☆
Scale of Miles
0 50 100 150
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Longitude East from 25° Greenwich
20° 25° 30°
60° 55° 50°
FINLAND
Helsingfors
Kronstadt
Petrograd
Tsarskoye Selo
Schlüsselburg
Gruzino
Gulf of Finland
Hango
Abo
Port Kunda
Pulkovo
Gatchina
Narva (Ivangorod)
Vezenberg
Reval (Revel)
Baltic Port
ESTHONIA
Lake Peipus
Novgorod
L. Ilmen
Shimsk
Staraya Russa
Yurjev (Dorpat)
L. Pskov
Pskov
Ostrov
Kholm
Hapsal
Pernau
Arensburg
DAGO
OESEL
Moon Sound
Gulf of Riga
Khainash
Walk
Zalismunde
Wolmar
Wenden
Windau (Windava)
LIVONIA
Riga
Niederichstadt
Tuckum
Mitau (Mitava)
COURLAND
Libau
Jacobstadt
Lyutsyn
Opochka
Toropets
Ryezitsa
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Drissa
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Gorodok
Vitebsk
Smolensk
Dvina
Telshi
Shavli
Novo Alexandrovsk
Memel
KOVNO
Poniewesch
Rosieny
Utziani
Sventzany
Tilsit
Königsberg
Pillau
Danzig
Danzig Gulf
Kokno
Wilna
Vileika
Orsha
Dnieper
Vilkowski
Olita
Smorgon
Suwalki
Augustowo
Lida
Grodno
Minsk
Igumen
Mogilef
Novogrudok
Mir
Slutsk
Bobruisk
Pripet Marshes
Baranovichi
Bielostok
Volkowisk
Ostrolenka
Lomzha
Osowiec
Allenstein
Tannenberg
Graudenz
Thorn
Mlawa
Przasnysz
Pultusk
Alexandrovo
Plock
Novo Georgiewsk
Modlin
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Praga
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Lowicz
Brest-Litovsk
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Chernigof
Ovrutch
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Radomysl
Vasilkof
Fastof
Kief
Dnieper
Czenstochowa
Zamosc
Beuthen
Bendzin
Cracow
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Soka
Radziwilow
Ostrog
Krementetz
Berdichef
Skvira
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Lezajsk
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